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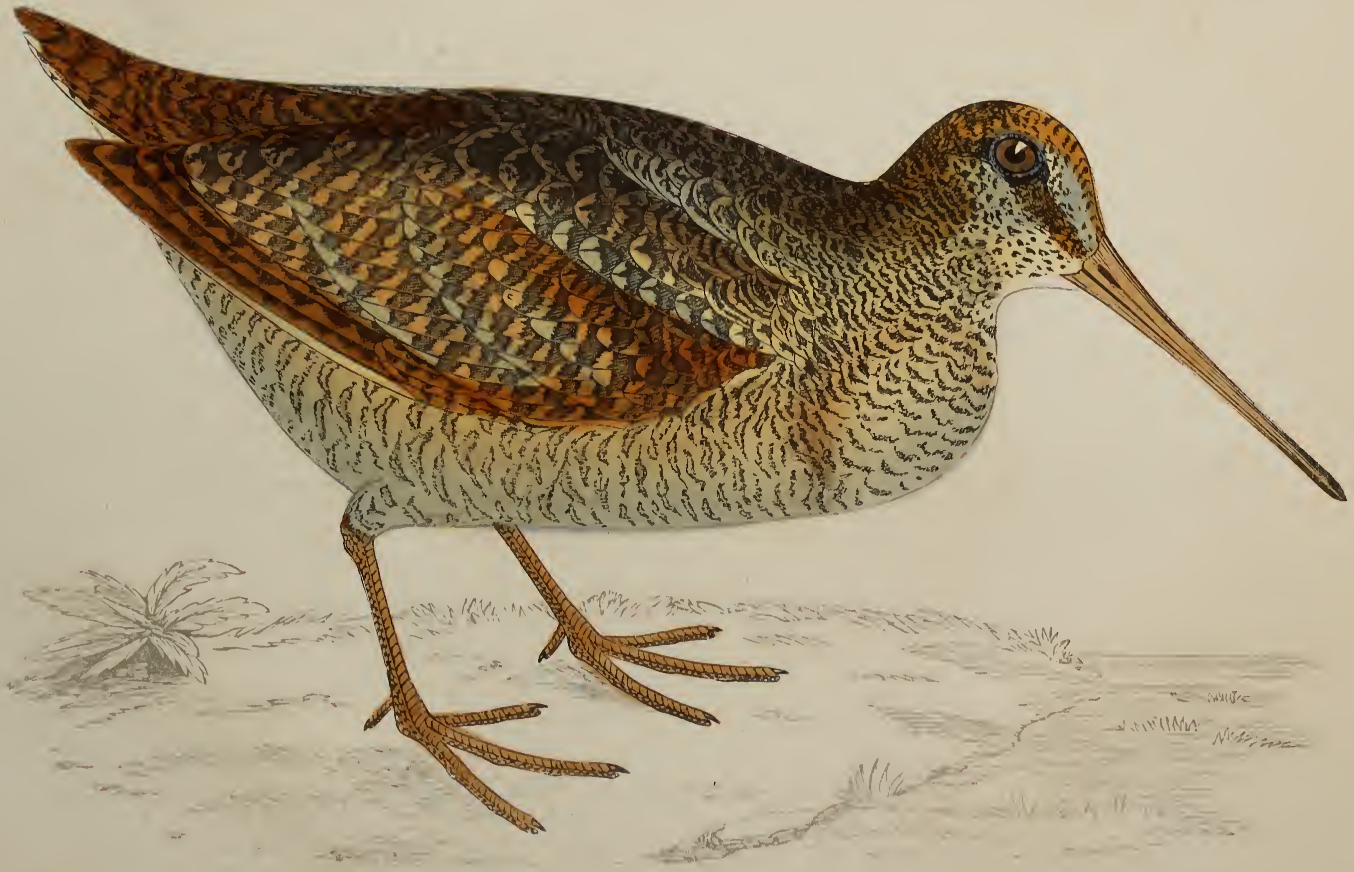

WOODCOCK.

A

HISTORY

OF

BRITISH BIRDS.

BY

rancis rpen
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VOL. VI.

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'De profundis ad Dominum.'

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THE SIXTH VOLUME.

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HISTORY OF BRITISH BIRDS.

WOODCOCK.

Scolopax rusticola, PENNANT. MONTAGU.

Scolopax—A Woodcock. *Rusticola*. *Rus*—The country. *Colo*—To inhabit.

IN Europe, the Woodcock retires into the wild districts of Norway, Lapland, and Sweden to build, also frequents Finland, Russia, and Silesia; in Switzerland, Germany, and France, it is less common; in Italy it is plentiful in winter: it occurs throughout the whole of the more temperate parts of the continent in greater or less numbers. In Asia it appertains to Persia, India, and Japan. In Africa to Barbary and other parts, and in Madeira is a perennial resident.

In this country these birds were formerly much more abundant than they are now, and numbers used to be taken in springes, nets, and traps. The destruction of their eggs in Sweden, where they, as likewise the birds themselves, are in much request, may perhaps account for this, as well as possibly for the circumstance of their building so much more frequently with us than formerly, as presently adverted to, though their actual numbers are diminished.

In Orkney and Shetland they occur on their way north and south.

The Woodcock arrives early in the neighbourhood of Brighton, at first in flocks of from ten to thirty, and afterwards in larger numbers, and are for a short time found, as I am informed by Mr. Thomas Thorncroft, of that place, in patches of furze on the Downs, from which they are started by the hounds. In the 'Dukeries,' in Nottinghamshire, Captain Turton, of the Third Dragoon Guards, has written me word that they are very numerous, and breed there, as they do in Ireland, and never leave.

The promontory of Flamborough Head, in Yorkshire, being the first land that birds make in coming across from the continent, has long been celebrated for flights of these birds. In Cambridgeshire they arrive the end of October, but the Rev. Leonard Jenyns mentions one killed at Bottisham on the 18th. of that month. They remain till the middle, or occasionally till the end of March, and appear to return by the same route by which they had come.

It is, however, curious that large numbers of the first arrivals occur on the western coast of Ireland and on the Scilly Islands, which are twenty miles west of Land's End. Dr. Stanley tries to account for this by supposing that in the weak condition in which the birds are at that season of the year, namely, before their arrival, they are carried on by the impetus of their flight, urged by the north-east strong gales which prevail, and which suit their purpose at the time, farther than where they would otherwise settle down. But I cannot agree with this explanation, for inasmuch as the farther they went, the weaker and more fatigued they would become, the natural consequence one might think would be, that they must be carried out into the Atlantic Ocean more or less far, according as the storm prevailed, and would not be able, any more than sooner on their journey, to bring up to the land. Besides this they generally come over, as just now said, in hazy weather, when the wind is not very high, though from that quarter; and do not seem much fatigued on their first arrival: they are to some extent, but after resting for a single day in any places, though ever so unsuitable to their habits, that are first met with, proceed onwards to the south, west, and inland.

Their migration is carried on usually, if not invariably, by night or in misty weather, and high up in the air: they travel singly or in pairs, but numbers at the same time. They have at different times been seen at sea, far from land, and some have been captured in the rigging and on the decks of vessels, this, too, off the west coast. Many more appear in some years than others.

A few arrive in September, more in October, at various periods of the month, but the chief part in November; they begin to remove again by the end of February.

The first flights consist chiefly of females, and these continuing but a few days, are succeeded by the later ones, which are composed principally of males. Upon their first arrival, they are frequently so much exhausted that individuals have been known to fly against houses, and alight in streets. 'During the summer months, this species,' says Meyer, 'inhabits the northern countries, where it chiefly breeds, and in winter the milder regions of the south. Deviations from this general rule, however, occur in different parts of the south of Europe, where the Woodcock has been found in many instances to inhabit the highest woods of the mountains during the summer, and to come down into the valleys on the approach of winter.'

'It appears that the bird in question is not able to bear very cold weather, since it is a rare circumstance to meet with one in the depth of our severe winters; but when the winter is mild, its occurs throughout the shooting season till the spring. Its susceptibility of cold is, doubtless, not the only reason for the Woodcock forsaking us in severe winters, but its difficulty of finding food must be great when the water is frozen, and the ground rendered impervious to its soft bill when hardened by continued frost. In this is seen again the wonderful care of Providence, in instilling that instinct into His creatures which enables them to pursue the right road towards finding their food under all gradations of circumstances.'

In crossing the sea in their spring and autumnal migrations, Woodcocks fly at a great height, but flocks are seen on the land but a little way over the ground. Charles St. John, Esq. relates that the master of a ship had observed some of these birds, when tired and exhausted, pitch for a moment or two with outspread wings, in the wake of the ship, and having rested themselves for a few moments, pursue their way. As a corroboration of this, I may state that it is mentioned in Jesse's 'Gleanings in Natural History,' that a gentleman having disturbed a Woodcock on the banks of the Humber, the bird flew over a sand-bank, and disappeared. On following it he observed it securely riding on the waves; and it remained there some time as if quite accustomed to the sea. On being again disturbed, it rose without effort, and flew away.

They pair in March previous to withdrawing. They return to the same haunt.

The nest of the Woodcock, whether it be that more observations have been made, or that more instances have really occurred, has certainly been found in much greater numbers of late years than formerly, when such a thing was thought to be of very rare occurrence.

A Woodcock was shot at Mr. Marsham's, of Stratton, in Norfolk, about the 4th. of June, 1847. In Yorkshire they appear to breed regularly in the woods of Storr's Hall, and Farnley, also occasionally near Sheffield, and in Wharncliffe Wood, near Rotherham, 'the place I know it well,' also in Brodsworth Wood, near Doncaster.

They build every year, not very rarely, on Cannock Chase, and in the preserves of the Marquis of Anglesea, at Beaudesert Park, near Rugeley, Staffordshire, as Thomas G. Bonney, Esq., of St. John's College, Cambridge, informs me; three were found there in May, 1843. A nest, with four eggs, was found, as I am written word by Stephen Stone, Esq., on the 15th. of April, 1853, in Bagley Wood, near Oxford. Another in Worcestershire; another in Kent, at Seacock's Heath, near Hawkhurst; others near Tonbridge and Goudhurst.

Instances, more or less numerous, have occurred in Bedfordshire, in the woods near Chicksand Priory, Ryton Wood, near Coventry, Warwickshire, and Hore Park Wood, and Baxterley, near Nuneaton, in the same county; the preserves of Linley Hall, Shropshire, the seat of R. More, Esq. Scawby, near Brigg, Lincolnshire, in woods belonging to Sir John Nelthorpe, Bart.; Middlemarsh, near Sherborne, Dorsetshire, in a cover belonging to H. G. Sturt, Esq. Highclere, Hampshire, the seat of Lord Carnarvon; in different parts of Norfolk; in Sussex, near Battle, and at Brede and Pilstye; in Surrey, near Godalming; in Herefordshire, at Derndale. In Monmouthshire, near Usk; in Hampshire, in Highden Wood, near Horndean, and the Forest of Bere; in Buckinghamshire, near Uxbridge; also in Hertfordshire. In Nottinghamshire, in a wood at Shireoaks, near Worksop.

In Scotland, at Conan, in Rosshire, and at Brahan Castle in the same county; also in Aberdeenshire, at Castle Forbes; and at Dunkeld, in Perthshire. A pair were found with a nest of three young ones, in the month of April, near Dornoway Castle, the seat of the Earl of Moray; another on the shore of Loch Lomond, near Belloch Castle.

The Woodcock has commenced of late years to breed in most of the large woods in Sutherlandshire. On their first arrival they resort to smaller plantations and copses, and even to open fields, as of turnips, and afterwards to more extensive covers.

The Woodcock is a nocturnal or crepuscular bird, hiding during the day under some evergreen or other thick bush, and towards night sallying out by some accustomed track to its feeding-ground. It is of shy and retired habits, and rarely takes wing by day unless disturbed. In milder weather it retires to higher grounds on moors and mountains, but on the approach of frost seeks the shelter of the lowlands. A pair of these birds have been known to fly at and attack a woman who approached a spring where she had found their nest containing five young ones. They return to their accustomed haunts, it would seem, year after year. Bishop Stanley mentions a Woodcock, which being accidentally captured in a net, was let loose after a brass ring had been fastened round its leg; this occurred in February. On finding itself at liberty, it rose to a very great height in the air, and directed its flight towards the sea, from which it was distant about twenty miles. In December, this same bird was shot in the same wood where it had been taken.

The Woodcock has been observed, in more instances than one, to remove its young by holding them in its feet; and this not only on being disturbed, but at other times ordinarily, to convey them to the nearest springs to feed. Woodcocks are in poor condition on their first arrival here, but soon become fat, and as need hardly be observed, are most excellent eating. In 'The Naturalist,' volume iii, page 19, there is a singular anecdote related of one of these birds being found on the 9th. of October, 1852, perched on the back of a stove in an iron warehouse, at Lynn, in Norfolk. In the year 1853, Woodcocks were unusually abundant in different parts of the country. In one wood near Thornaye, Norfolk, one hundred and fifty-three were shot in three days—ninety, thirty, and thirty-three.

In Ireland, where they have been the most abundant, the Earl of Claremont formerly shot fifty couple in one day. The author of 'Wild Sports of the West,' mentions that from a copse of not more than thirty acres, he has seen fifty couple flushed; and in Daniels' 'Rural Sports,' it is recorded that Mr. Yea, of Swansea, killed a hundred couple in the season of

1796. The Rev. Gilbert White too, mentions that a gentleman at Scilly shot twenty-nine couple in one day.

A Woodcock has been seen, at Newnham, in Gloucestershire, to perch on an oak tree. As the name implies, they frequent woods, but seem to prefer those in which the trees are of young growth, and especially, it is said, such as have a north-east aspect, on account of their being less exposed to the glare of day.

The flight of the Woodcock has been estimated to be at the rate of one hundred and fifty miles an hour. Several instances have occurred of their dashing themselves to death, from its force against the glass of lighthouses. Five were thus killed in Anglesea; one in Ireland, where it broke a pane of plate glass three eighths of an inch in thickness, and its own breast-bone and wings as well; others at the Eddystone Lighthouse, so well known in story for its destruction by the tremendous storm of 1703. In general, however, the flight of the Woodcock is not so rapid as might be hence supposed, but like others of its class it turns and twists in a curious manner. A peculiar rustling of the wings is made in flying, the bill then is held downwards: so it is when the bird is standing at rest. If disturbed it does not fly at any height nor far, but soon seeks the shelter of some bush or other covert, or returns round again to the wood it had left. When rising of its own accord, it mounts high at once, and, travelling always at night, proceeds the more quickly. It walks in a heavy and somewhat awkward manner, and flirts up its tail at times, shewing the white tips of the feathers distinctly.

'In the autumn and spring of the year, when Woodcocks migrate, they frequently rove about for a quarter of an hour at night and morning, pursuing one another on the wing, snapping at each other, and tumbling about, either at dusk, just before dark, or in the morning until daylight.'

The Rev. William Bree describes the note to me, having heard it on more than one occasion, in the spring of 1854, in the New Forest in Hampshire, as a kind of snort; another naturalist describes it as a rumbling sound. The young, if alarmed, emit a very shrill stridulous note: Meyer likens it to 'tseep,' and 'dack,' the latter expressive of alarm and fear.

The Woodcock feeds on insects and worms, which latter it seems to detect by scenting, and secures unerringly by boring with the bill, and also by turning any loose mould or leaves from side to side.

The young are usually hatched about the middle of April, or even by the end of March; Mr. Blyth saw two in the year 1836, on the 20th. of April; and on the 22nd. of April Mr. Gould had a couple of young ones, apparently then three weeks old.

The nest is built in woods and plantations, among dry grass, fern, or leaves, of which its structure is formed. It is loosely put together, but is placed in some warm spot.

The eggs are generally four in number. They require seventeen days incubation: the hen bird sits very close. The young run about as soon as hatched.

Two broods are hatched in the year.

Bewick thus well describes the general appearance of the bird:—'The upper parts of the plumage are so marked, spotted, barred, streaked, and variegated, that to describe them with accuracy would be difficult and tedious. The colours, consisting of black, white, grey, red, brown, rufous, and yellow, are so disposed in rows, crossed and broken at intervals by lines and marks of different shapes, that the whole seems to the eye, at a little distance, blended together and confused, which makes the bird appear exactly like the withered stalks and leaves of ferns, sticks, moss, and grasses, which form the back ground of the scenery by which it is sheltered in its moist and solitary retreats,'

Male; the weight varies to an extraordinary degree; it ordinarily is from eleven to twelve ounces, but a young bird of the year will in the autumn sometimes be found only to weigh seven ounces, and one has been known only five ounces and a half; it was shot the 10th. of December, 1832, at Trebartha Hall, in Cornwall, the seat of F. H. Rodd, Esq. Length, about one foot one inch and three quarters to one foot two inches, or one foot two and a half; bill, pale reddish brown, grey at the base, dark brown towards the tip, the tip itself dusky; it is about three inches long, and furrowed nearly the whole of its length: the upper mandible projects beyond and turns over the lower one. From its base to the eye proceeds a dark brown streak, the feathers on each side of which are very pale in colour—nearly white. Iris, dark brown, large, prominent, and placed high up and far back in the head; forehead, long, greyish brown in colour; sides of the head, pale brown, spotted triangularly with dark brown; the crown is flat; the feathers on the back of the neck and nape are a mixture of three shades of brown, and divided into three nearly equal patches by two bars of yellowish brown; chin, pale yellowish brown—nearly white. Throat and breast, pale brown, barred across with dark brown, both shades lighter in old birds; on its upper part are two patches of rufous, which differ in depth of colour in different birds; back, mottled with three shades of brown.

The wings expand to the width of two feet two inches; greater and lesser wing coverts, reddish brown, with open oval rings of dark brown; primaries, blackish brown, with triangular-shaped spots of pale reddish brown along the margin of each web; at the root of the first quill is a small narrow and pointed feather, found serviceable by painters as a pencil; the first quill feather is marked with alternate dark and light spots of a somewhat triangular shape, but they are said to wear out with age from the base to the end of the feathers; the second is the longest; secondaries and tertiaries, blackish brown, but with the light-coloured marks more elongated, and reaching across to the shaft; underneath, the quill feathers are dark slate grey, the triangular marks yellowish grey; greater and lesser under wing coverts, pale brown barred with dark brown. The tail, of twelve feathers, is black, indented across with reddish spots on the edges, and tipped with dark grey; underneath, it is nearly black tipped with white; upper tail coverts, chesnut brown tipped with grey, and barred across with dark brown; under tail coverts, yellowish white, with black triangular-shaped central spots. The legs, which are short, and feathered to the knees, are, as the toes, dark brownish grey; claws, black.

The female exceeds the female in size; weight, ordinarily from thirteen to fifteen ounces: one is recorded in a letter from Lady Peyton to Miss Hoste, as communicated by Lord Braybrooke to Mr. Yarrell, which was of the extraordinary weight of twenty-seven ounces; it was shot at Narborough, in Norfolk, about 1775 or 1776. Some years previously one had been killed at Hadleigh, in Suffolk, which weighed twenty-four ounces. Another was shot at Audley End, the seat of Lord Braybrooke, which weighed sixteen ounces. In Pennant's 'British Zoology,' one is mentioned as killed at Holywell, of the weight of twenty ounces; and in Daniels' 'Rural Sports,' one of seventeen ounces. The head on the sides about the streak from the bill to the eye, is darker than in the male, and the small triangular-shaped specks are less defined; the back has less of the pale brown and grey.

The first quill feather is without spots on the outer edge; upper tail coverts, more red and less grey than in the male.

Some specimens are much darker coloured than others, and some are rufous; white individuals have been met with, and cream-coloured ones. The Rev. Gilbert White, of Selborne, mentions a white Woodcock, only on the back being a few spots of the natural colour.

GREAT SNIPE.

SOLITARY SNIPE. DOUBLE SNIPE.

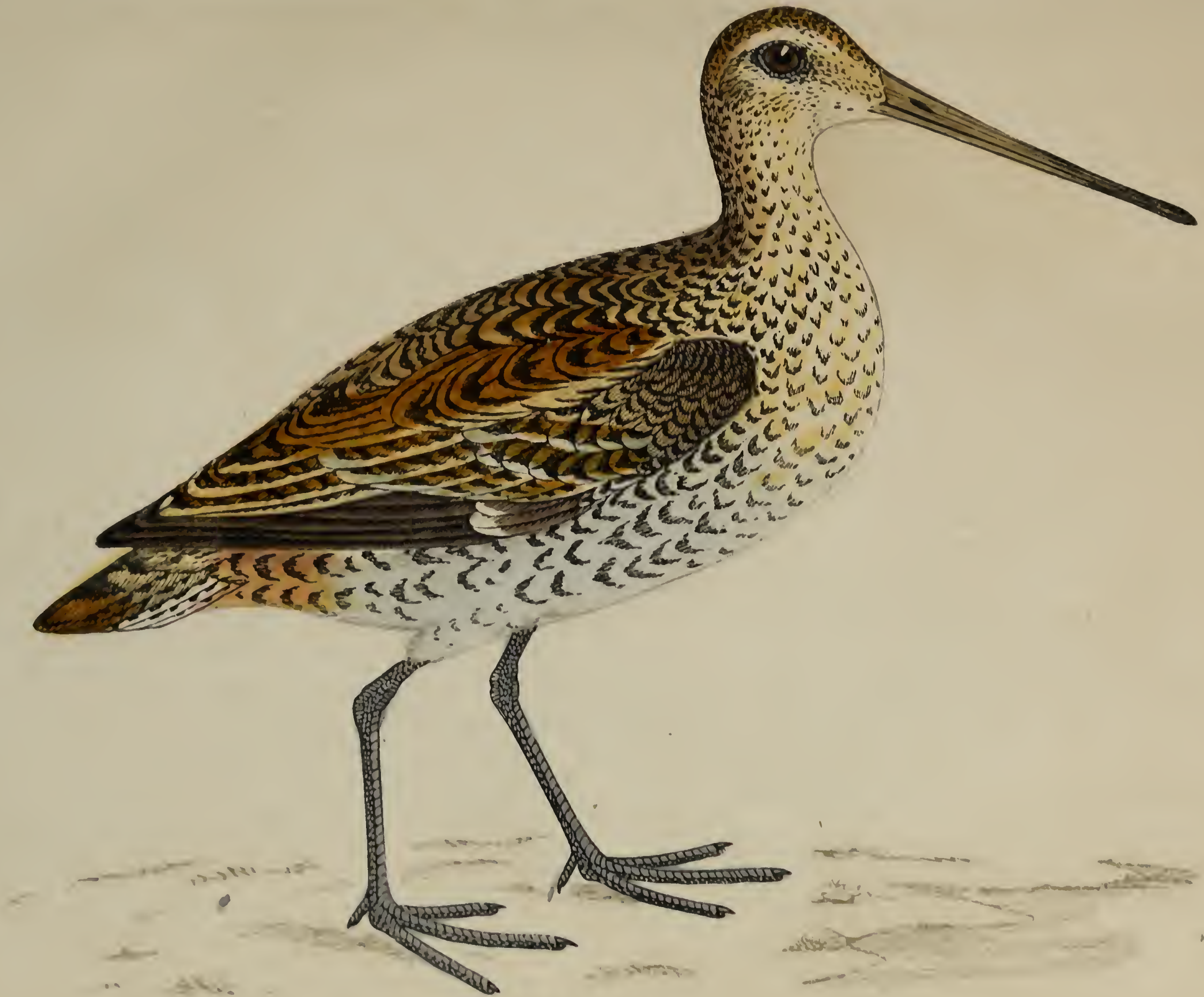
Scolopax major,	Pennant. Montagu.
Gallinago major,	Stephens.

Scolopax—A Woodcock, or Snipe. *Major*—Greater.

This Snipe is found in Europe—in Sweden and Norway, where it breeds in considerable numbers, Holland, France, Germany, Bohemia, Switzerland, and Italy, in the Pontine Marshes, near Rome. In Asia, in Persia, and about the Caucasus.

Pennant was the first to describe this as a British bird, from a specimen preserved in the celebrated Leverian Museum. It was killed in Lancashire.

In Norfolk it is not uncommon in the autumn, in August and September, but is met with only in small numbers. W. F. W. Bird, Esq. tells me of three he saw shot there, and of another sent from Yarmouth. P. E. Hansell, Esq. has reported his having found a nest with four eggs, in April, 1846, at Belaugh, near Wroxham, the birds belonging to which appeared to be of this species; and he also informs me of a male bird having been killed near Lowestoft, in Suffolk, in the month of April, 1851. In the county of Northumberland several instances have occurred; one near Twizel, the seat of Prideaux John Selby, Esq., in 1822. In Durham, five or six on Sedgemoor. Two or three were obtained near Castle Eden in the winter of 1853; and the Hon. Augustus Barrington, and his brother Lord Barrington, shot, many years ago, four Solitary Snipes, two of which



GREAT SNIPE.

were young birds, scarcely full-fledged. This was on Fishburn Carr, between Castle Eden and Darlington.

In Devonshire, one was shot on Shaugh Moor, September 7th., 1850. In Cornwall, it occurred at Gwyllyn Vase, near Falmouth, in December, 1848. In Kent, near Dover, one. In Derbyshire, a few have been observed near Melbourne, in the autumn, at different times. In Sussex, one was shot near Lewes, in October, 1849.

Mr. Chaffey has seen it at Dodington, in Kent, in September, 1851. The Rev. Charles Alington procured one in the parish of Marsh Chapel, Lincolnshire, in the year 1850; and A. Fuller, Esq. mentions one shot at Tetney, near Grimsby, in September, 1852. In Oxfordshire, one or two have been found at Botley—one the end of September, 1851. N. Rowe, Esq., of Worcester College, Oxford, has written me word of one which was killed in the winter of 1851, in a sand-pit on the road to Botley from Oxford. It has occurred also in Surrey, near Godalming.

In Ireland it has been met with.

In Orkney, this bird appeared several times in Sanday, in September, 1851.

They occur with us in the autumn on their way southwards, young birds principally, but also old ones which seem to continue to mate together.

The Solitary Snipe is always found singly, when not in pairs, and never in flocks. It lies close, and rarely flies far if put up. It frequents the edges of swamps, and the borders of any small water-courses in meadows or other places. It is a most excellent bird to eat. When engaged with their young both birds are very heedless of danger, and if alarmed from the nest settle again close by on some little eminence.

They fly in a heavy manner, and not very swiftly, with the tail spread, and usually settle again after proceeding but a short distance straight forwards and at a low elevation. During the pairing season the males soar to a great height, and make a drumming noise in descending, the effect of a vibration of the wings. When standing on the ground they generally keep the bill pointed towards the earth, and with the neck shortened. They walk in an easy manner, but do not run fast.

They feed on the caddis, or larvæ, of flies, as also on worms and insects, swallowing therewith a little sand. The cases of the former, and any other hard portions of their food, are reported to be cast up in pellets. They seek their food in the evening, or by the light of the 'Vaga Luna,' and bore with their bills in suitable places in search thereof.

The note is a monosyllabic 'bad, bad,' uttered, it is said, when one of these birds happens to meet another, and also, Mr. Selby says, on being disturbed.

The nest is placed on a tust of grass or hillock in a marsh near to some standing water, and is lined with a little dry grass and fragments of other herbage.

The eggs are four in number, of a yellowish olive brown colour, spotted with two shades of reddish brown. They require seventeen days incubation, and then the young are tended for about a month by their parents.

Male; weight, from seven to nine ounces; length, about one foot, to one foot and half an inch; bill, dusky at the tip, darker brown towards the middle, pale yellowish brown at the base; from it a cream yellow streak spotted with brown proceeds over the eye; between the bill and the eye is a narrow streak of rich chesnut brown. Forehead and crown, rich dark brown, with a few specks of reddish brown, along it a narrow pale brown or cream-coloured stripe; head on the sides, dull cream white, speckled with dusky; neck, pale brown, the centre of each feather darker brown; on the back and the nape, pale yellowish rufous, spotted with black; in front the neck is yellowish white, with large angular brown spots. Chin and throat, dull cream-coloured white, speckled with dusky; breast above, pale brown, with semicircular bands of brownish black; on its lower part, pale brownish white, with the same dark brown cross markings as above. Back above, rich brownish black, the feathers margined and streaked along their centres with fine buff or straw-colour; on the lower part, dark brown edged with paler brown.

The wings have the first quill feather the longest; they measure in expanse one foot and a half; greater wing coverts, black, tipped with white; lesser wing coverts, nearly black, the upper ones tipped with pale yellowish brown, the lower with white; primaries, dusky or dull greyish black, the shafts white; secondaries, dull black, tipped with white; tertiaries, black, barred with pale brown, and margined with a double line of black and yellowish white. The tail is of sixteen feathers, the two centre ones black for two thirds of their length, the two next, that is, one on each side, nearly all white, the others rich brownish black from the base for three fourths of their length, followed by a patch of chesnut succeeded by black, and this again by white or reddish white at the tip; upper tail coverts, pale yellowish brown, varied with dark brown. Legs and toes, greenish or yellowish brown; claws, black.

The female is larger in size, and darker in colour on the sides of the head. The breast has less of the dark semicircular marks; the greater and lesser wing coverts have the white spots larger and clearer.

The young have the bill shorter, and the white on the outside tail feathers is only acquired by degrees.

COMMON SNIPE.

WHOLE SNIPE. SNITE. HEATHER BLEATER.

Scolopax gallinago,	Pennant. Montagu,
" *gallinaria,*	Gmelin.
Gallinago media,	Shaw.

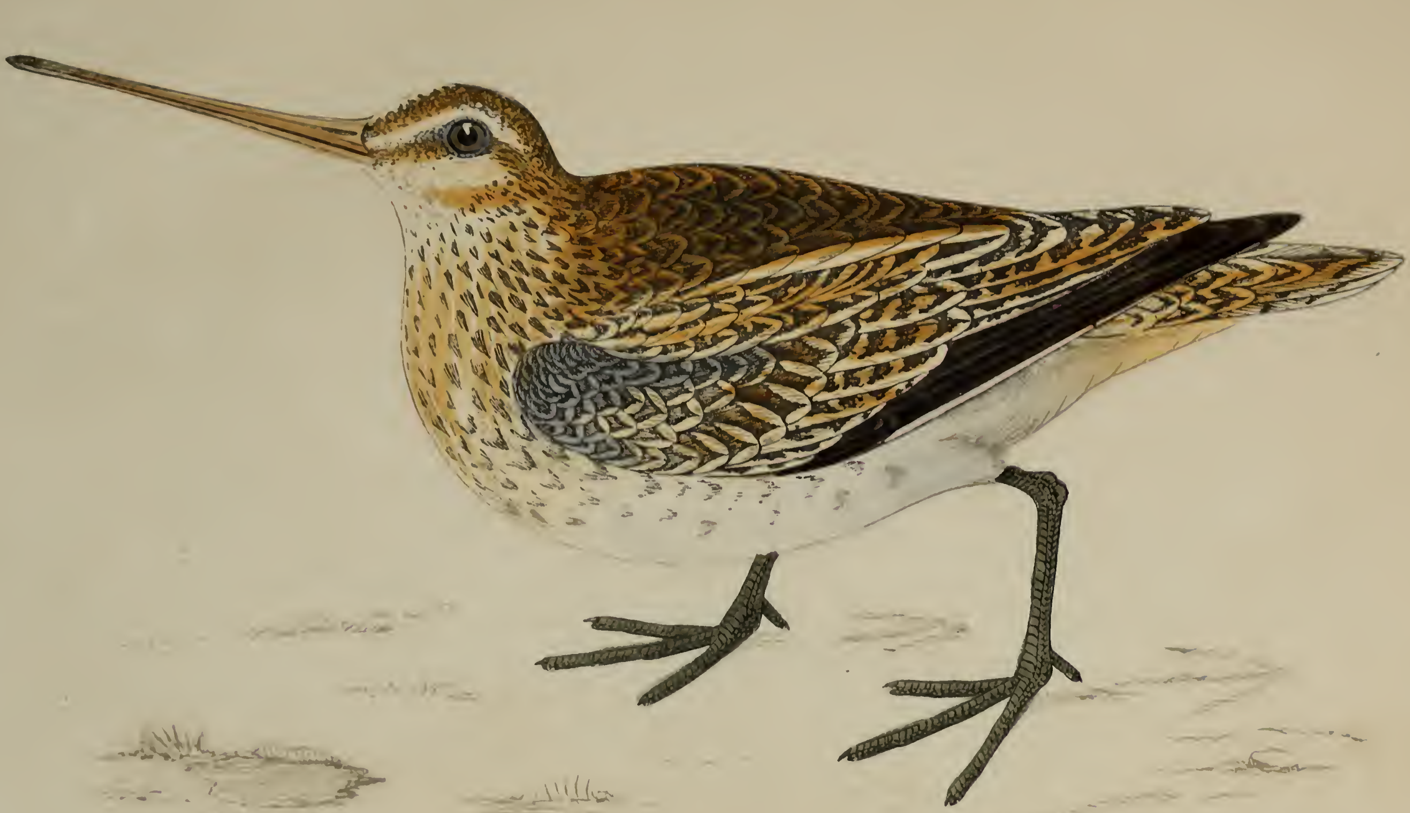
Scolopax—A Woodcock, or Snipe. *Gallinago*—............?

The Snipe, like the trout, is connected with my earliest recollections. There is no bird which gives you more the idea of a wild-fowl. You may look at a hundred, one after another, and each will be regarded with fresh interest, and as if in a new point of view. There is a 'Je ne scai quoi' in its whole appearance, which seems to associate you with itself in a love for running brooks and quiet scenes.

The Snipe is very extensively distributed. In Europe it is found in considerable numbers, in Germany, Holland, France, Spain, Switzerland, Hungary, Illyria, and Italy, especially in the Pontine Marshes, near Rome, where they get up, literally, it is said, in clouds; also in Russia, Norway, Sweden, Lapland, and Denmark, and as far north as the Faroe Islands, Iceland and Greenland. In Asia, it has been noticed in Siberia and Asia Minor; and in Africa, it is said, in Lower Egypt.

The Snipe breeds, and often in considerable numbers, in many parts of the country; near Penryn, in Cornwall, in Devonshire, on Dartmoor, Dorsetshire, Hampshire, in the New Forest, Cambridgeshire, in Burwell and Swaffham Fens, and other like parts; and in Norfolk, in most of the marshy parts of the county.

In Scotland, it occurs in Sutherlandshire in plenty, also in the Orkneys, Hoy, and all the other islands, as likewise in the Shetland Isles, but less abundantly, and also in the Hebrides.



SNIPE.

In Ireland it is particularly abundant; I have seen them there in numbers frequenting elevated heathy ground, as well as the sides of streams. They are however said to be now somewhat less numerous there than formerly.

These birds travel at night, and large flights arrive annually on the north-eastern coasts, chiefly in the beginning of November, from Norway and the other countries of old Scandinavia. In the autumn they descend from their higher breeding-grounds, and spread over the country, where they are then found in almost all moist or watery places. They seldom remain long in one spot, some change either of the weather or the wind, or other cause unknown to us, regulating their movements, which are thus conducted rather capriciously as we might be disposed to consider, but doubtless not without good reasons of their own.

The Snipe is usually found in wet and marshy situations, and by the sides of ponds, lakes, rivers, and rivulets, drains, ditches, and canals, but also at times on heathy hills, and this too in flocks. They assemble thus in considerable numbers, though not very closely, not so much, as it would appear, from a desire of association among themselves, as from like motives in the choice of ground; vast numbers as well as smaller flocks thus collect together, but they preserve no community in their movements, each Snipe taking its own way, and settling again, some nearer, some farther off; single birds, it may be, returning again one by one after a time. They approach the neighbourhood of houses without fear: I have put up some this winter during the snow-blast we have had, and shot one, standing in my own garden, which is bordered by a little running stream.

When the still waters are frozen up they naturally resort to running streams and warm springs, where the sources of supply are still left open to them. In winter they may often be observed on the sea-shore. As many as nineteen are said to have been killed at a single shot, if so one may say, of a double-barrelled gun. W. F. W. Bird, Esq. informs me that the Snipe at times approaches London very closely, and that within the last five years he has known them killed in Islington, and one also within the last few years, on the spot where the New Cattle Market now stands. This bird, when by itself, generally lies pretty close, but if a number are together it makes them much more careful, and the note of alarm given by the first causes all the others to get up: when the wind is high they seem to rise more readily than at other times. It is, as need hardly be mentioned, in much esteem for the table, and some are taken in springes, but the most are procured with the gun.

The flight of the Snipe is very swift, and at first zigzag, but it becomes more regular, or rather, the movements from side to side are more extended, and, after about sixty or eighty yards continuance, the bird rises high in the air, as if to descry some other proper place to alight, to which it accordingly directs its course, and descends in a very rapid and abrupt manner, settling down very suddenly, and dropping like a stone. I have known them, however, when put up, alight again not far off—one recently in a neighbouring stubble, and another under a hedge in a grass field. They move about in a leisurely manner, and keep moving the tail every now and then.

In the early spring these birds soar to a vast height, sometimes far out of sight, and observable only by their note. These flights, which are of lengthened duration, are made at different times during the day, but mostly towards evening, and are continued while the female is sitting. Whole Snipes, unlike the smaller species, generally fly off, if put up, to some more or less considerable distance. They are very easily brought down by shot; I have known one killed—some of my old schoolfellows will well remember the fact—at a distance of seventy-two yards. Alas! poor Venour! He lies now in Bromsgrove churchyard, side by side with Lightfoot, his great and inseparable friend, the only two of my companions who died at school. 'In their death they were not divided.' Good reader, pardon this passing record of their memory. I have never but once seen the Snipe on the ground; the only occasion on which I did, was by the side of a little pond close to the road between Driffield and Beverley. (The day after the above was written, I have seen another by the brook near Nunburnholme Rectory,) On one only occasion have I seen this bird perched in a tree; it is now a good many years ago, as is proved by my having been at the time on the outside of a coach—one of those that ran between Southampton and Exeter. It was driven at the time by Cox, then, though I fear not now, Junior; for not only must his father, a most respectable man—Cox, Senior, by whom I well remember the son being first introduced on the 'Stage' in a subordinate capacity, have long since succumbed to the universal fiat—his end perhaps accelerated by mortification at the triumph of the railroad—but Junior lapses into a positive as well as a relative term, and soon, though we must not say too soon, ceases to be appropriate in either case. I was sitting behind him, for I had not the reins that morning, and pointed out to him as we passed a tree by the road, a Snipe perched on one of the branches which was bare of leaves, it being winter at the time. If he is still living, for I have not seen him for some years, he will remember the fact, for he was much struck with it as well as myself, and I have since more than once reminded him of it. Those days are gone for ever—

'The coach of other days is faded,
  And all its glories past;
For steam with envious cloud hath shaded.
  Its hopes too bright to last.'

Only last week I happened to meet at York one of the old mail coachmen between that city and Doncaster, Holtby, well known in days of yore, and heard him draw a comparison between the road and the rail, to the decided deprecation of the latter. I could not but in some measure agree with him:—'If the coach overturns, and you are thrown into the ditch, and break your arm or your leg, there you are; but if there comes a smash on the railway—where are you?'

In running the Snipe jerks the tail, spreading it out also sideways

They feed on worms, small shell-fish, larvæ, insects, and vegetable substances, and a few seeds are at times also swallowed, but perhaps inadvertently, as well as some sand. The first-named are procured by boring with the long bill in soft ground.

The note of the Snipe, uttered on the wing, and when first put up, is an abrupt pipe; Selby expresses it by the word 'chissick,' lispingly pronounced. Another sound, resembling a tremulous bleating or humming, is also made, but this is supposed to be produced by the action of the wings, for the bird at such times is observed to descend with great swiftness, and with a thrilling movement of the pinions. A whirring noise is produced by the bird at times when on the ground, and this without any apparent motion of the wings, as stated, after personal observation, by William Richard Fisher, Esq., of Yarmouth, in the 'Zoologist,' page 1501.

Towards the end of March, or beginning of April, the male bird begins to call for a mate.

The nest is commonly placed in the middle of a tuft of grass, rushes, or heather, in a shallow depression in the surface; by the side of water, as also among the heather where watery spots abound, on the hill side, often at an elevation of from five hundred to a thousand feet above the level of the plain. A few chance stalks furnish its lining, if any be provided at all, which is not always the case.

The eggs are four in number, and of a very large size in proportion to that of the bird; their colour is pale yellowish, or greenish white, blotted at the larger end with two or three shades of brown. Some are spotted all over with small spots; some are of a clear green ground, some light blue, and others olive brown. Six eggs have several times been found in one nest, as mentioned by the Rev. G. Low, in his 'Fauna Orcadensis;' but they doubtless must have been the joint contribution of two birds.

The young leave the nest as soon as hatched, and are taken care of by their parents till able to provide for themselves. They are usually able to fly before the middle of July, but in some seasons not till the middle of August.

Male; weight, about four ounces; length, from ten and a half or eleven inches and a half, to nearly one foot; the bill, which is at first tender, but becomes harder in fully adult birds, is in the latter of very elegant appearance, three inches in length, long and slender; the lower mandible fits at the tip into the upper one, which somewhat projects over it: the latter is rugose on the surface at the same part. It is of a dark brown colour, dusky at the point, pale reddish or yellowish brown at the base. From it a dark brown streak runs to the eye; over it and over the eye a pale brown or light ferruginous one. Iris, dusky or dark brown. Head on the sides, spotted with dusky grey, and tinged in winter with ferruginous brown; on the crown, very dark brown, streaked along the centre with whitish or light yellowish chesnut brown. Neck on the sides and in the front, pale brown, spotted in a streak with a darker shade. Chin and throat, white, or nearly white; breast on the upper part, pale yellowish or ferruginous brown, spotted with dusky grey; below white; on the sides, greyish white, barred with dusky black, or dark brown. Back, dark velvet blackish brown, slightly spotted with pale brown, with a purple or bronze reflection. Four conspicuous lines of rich buff, pale cream-colour in winter, run down its sides, the broad outside margins of the long scapular feathers, which are brown along their centres.

The wings have the first quill the longest. They expand to about the width of one foot two inches. Greater and lesser wing coverts, dusky brown, with pale brown or cream-coloured edges and marks on the tips. Primaries, dull black, the first with its outer webs nearly white; secondaries, dull black tipped with whitish, the inner one striated and barred with light ferruginous; tertiaries, black, barred with pale brown. The tail, of fourteen feathers, is, at the base and for two thirds of its length, black with light ferruginous bars; on the outer portion are oval patches of pale chesnut, bounded by a dusky brown band; the tips of the feathers white. Upper tail coverts, barred with alternate bars of dusky black and pale yellowish brown; under tail coverts, pale yellowish brown, barred with greyish black; the shafts of the feathers bend inwards. Legs and toes, greyish or brownish green.

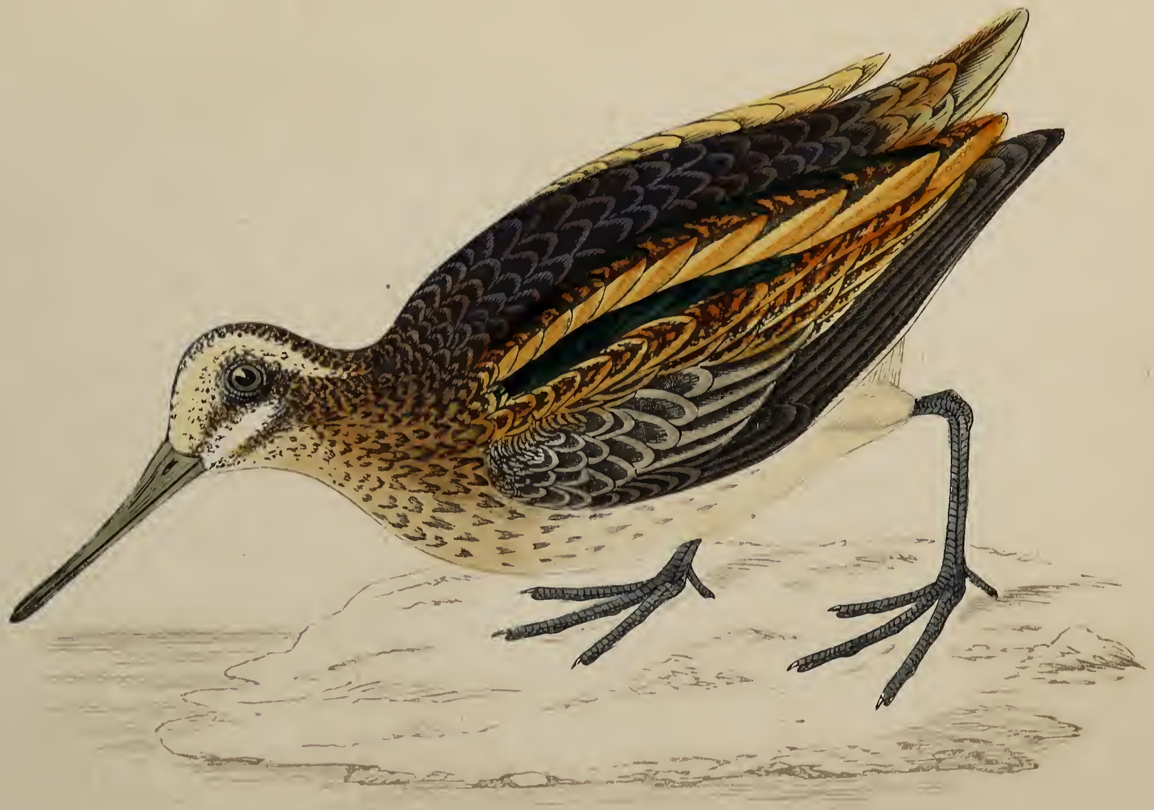
The female rather exceeds the male in size; the plumage of both is similar.

'A young bird about two thirds grown, with the beak only one inch long, and with down still adhering about the head, has the narrow light-coloured margins, and the rich red brown on the feathers of the upper surface of the body and wings, as in the old bird in summer.' In 'The Naturalist,' new series, volume ii, page 132, one is described as having been shot at Guestwick, in Norfolk, which was of a delicate buff-colour, with darker markings on the back and wings, and the bill and legs of a pink hue. I have also seen a dull buff-coloured one, in the possession of the Rev. J. Mathews, Vicar of Wetwang. In the 'Zoologist,' page 2801, another is mentioned by Edmund Thomas Higgins, in which the outer feather on one side was considerably longer than the second, and on the other, shorter.

A pied variety of this species was procured near Richmond, Yorkshire.

One has been known with its bill, for considerably more than half its length, turned upwards, like that of the Avocet. In the 'Magazine of Natural History,' volume ii, page 437, one is described which had the bill yellow, with a brown tip, the lines on the head of a dull buff; the breast above, yellowish brown, yellow, and light chesnut; the quills and lesser wing coverts, light dusky brown; the tail feathers barred with brown, chesnut, white, and yellow; upper tail coverts, brown, yellow, chesnut, and white intermixed; the legs and toes, light yellowish brown.

The plate is from a drawing by the Rev. R. P. Alington, of Swinhope Rectory, Lincolnshire.



JACK SNIPE.

JACK SNIPE.

JUDCOCK. HALF SNIPE.

Scolopax gallinula,	PENNANT. MONTAGU.
Gallinago minor,	BRISSON.
" *minima,*	RAY. WILLUGHBY. STEPHENS.

Scolopax—A Woodcock, or Snipe. *Gallinula*—............?

WELL do I recall, among other recollections betokening the love of nature which from the very first seemed part of my mind, the extreme admiration with which I regarded the singular appearance of this true game and wild-looking bird when first seen:

> 'Could those days but come again!'

But no! it is best as it is. 'Let by-gones be by-gones:' let Hope prevail against Memory in the mind of the Christian Clergyman, and from his own experience may he the better guide his flock.

This species is found in Europe—in Russia, Sweden, Denmark, France, and Italy. In Asia—in Siberia, Asia Minor, the vicinity of the Caucasus, and in India, in the Dukkun. It is believed to breed in the marshes of Holstein and Hanover, as also in Zealand.

In this country it is not so numerous as the larger species. It is said to breed in Sutherlandshire.

In Orkney it is a regular winter visitant, and is pretty abundant.

This bird frequents the moist borders of rivers, streams, lakes, and ditches.

The Judcock travels by night, and arrives here towards the middle of September, and departs by the end of February, or the beginning of March, while some stay till the first week in April, or even remain till towards the end of that month. A few individuals have been met with here in summer. Mr. C. Girdlestone had one brought to him in June, 1822. This was in Norfolk; and in the year 1824, in May or June, he himself saw a pair on Bradwell Common, in that county. Two years later another was brought to him. On the 1st. of August, 1833, one was shot on Barton Fen, where the person who shot it said that he had once killed one in summer. In the 'Zoologist,' page 2830, three are stated to have been seen near Melbourne, in Derbyshire, by J. J. Briggs, Esq., on the 18th. of August, 1845.

Lord Garvagh has seen this bird in summer, near Garvagh, in the county of Londonderry, in Ireland, and obtained a nest with four eggs taken on a heathy hill near there. It was placed near a pool of water, and almost hid under a tuft of rushes. Mr. Thompson, of Belfast, has also given what he considered an authenticated instance of the Judcock breeding in Ireland. Mr. Hewitson has seen it on Prestwick Carr, in Northumberland, in the breeding time; and the Rev. G. Low, in Orkney, at the same season.

It lies very close, and is not easily put up without a dog indeed, even when set by a dog, it has been known to allow itself to be taken up by the hand. At some times, nevertheless, as on the beginning of a thaw after a frost, it appears more on the alert, getting up almost as readily as the larger species. When engaged with its nest, however, it is especially liable to be overlooked, allowing itself to be even walked over without moving. It is by no means shy of approaching houses. I have shot one in a field close to my own garden. It is a bird of solitary habits, and is mostly found singly, though two may frequent the same locality more or less nearly. It is equal as a delicacy for the table to the other species.

Its flight is not very swift, but at the first rising of the bird, very unsteady. It has a habit of returning to, or nearly to, the same place from which it arose, and does not fly far before doing so. The wings are considerably bent in flying.

It feeds on small worms, larvæ, and winter insects, and in search of the former probes with its bill in the soft mud or sand. It also swallows a little gravel with its food, and at times seeds, but the latter perhaps accidentally.

It makes its nest on some grassy knoll, or among a tuft of rushes.

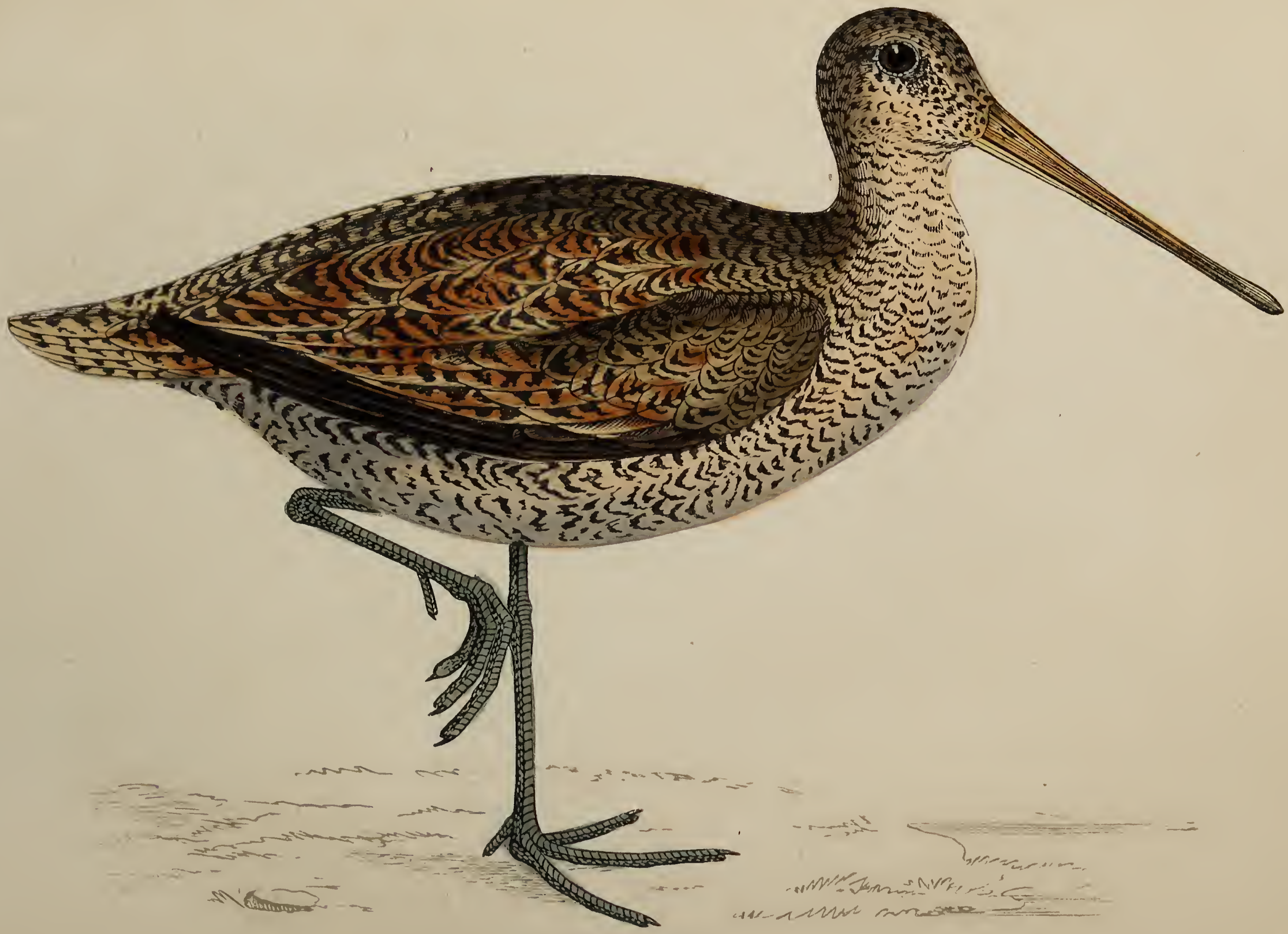
The eggs are four in number, and of a yellowish olive colour, spotted about the larger end with two shades of brown.

The apparent difference between this and the larger species, is, at first sight, very trifling, in all but size, and the length of the bill. Male; weight, about two ounces to two and a quarter; length, a little over eight inches to eight and a half; bill, greyish dusky; the tip darker, the base pale yellowish red, with a bloom of grey; it is about two inches long; from it a broad cream-coloured or pale brown streak extends over the eye and down the nape, with a narrow darker one along the middle line of the hinder part, and as far as the eye is a space of pale yellowish brown; iris, dusky dark brown. Head on the sides, greyish or brownish white, with the tips of the feathers black, giving it a sort of neutral tint; on the crown, rich dark blackish brown, the feathers edged with rufous brown, in winter changed to grey; it is bordered on each side with a yellowish streak, beneath which is a dusky one; neck on the back and nape, ferruginous, or greyish brown, varied with dusky brown. Chin and throat, white, or greyish, or pale brownish white; breast above, pale yellowish brown, tinged with grey, and spotted with dusky; below, white, and on the sides dashed with greyish black, and tinted with brown; back, rich dark blackish brown in waves, with olive bronze and purple reflections, the feathers narrowly tipped with white, and broadly margined with pale dull yellow; in winter it becomes more grey. The scapular feathers are long, and with their outer webs of a rich cream yellow form two conspicuous bands along each side.

The wings have the first quill the longest. The axillary feathers are white, clouded irregularly with blackish grey; greater and lesser wing coverts, dusky black, the feathers narrowly edged with pale brown and white; primaries, dusky black; secondaries also dusky black, but the tips pointed with white; tertiaries, brownish black; spotted and streaked in waves with rich reddish brown, and edged with pale greyish white. The tail, of twelve pointed feathers, is dusky greyish or brownish black, edged with very pale ferruginous or rufous; it is of a wedge shape; upper tail coverts, brown, edged with buff; under tail coverts, white. Legs and toes, dark greenish or greyish brown; claws, black.

The female is larger than the male, and her colours not so bright.

The young birds want the brilliant green and purple reflections. Head on the crown, neck on the back and nape, yellowish ash-colour, with dark spots and green yellow edges to the feathers: front of the neck and throat, buff-colour, finely marked with black; breast, white; back, yellowish ash-colour, with a black mark on the larger feathers between the light edges and the central colouring. Greater and lesser wing coverts, yellowish ash-colour, with black spots, and greenish yellow edges; tertiaries, yellowish ash-colour, with black spots and greenish yellow edges to the inner webs, and rufous edges to the outer webs; upper tail coverts, white.



SABINE'S SNIPE.

SABINE'S SNIPE.

Scolopax Sabini, FLEMING. SELBY. JENYNS.

Scolopax—A Woodcock, or Snipe. *Sabini*—Of Sabine.

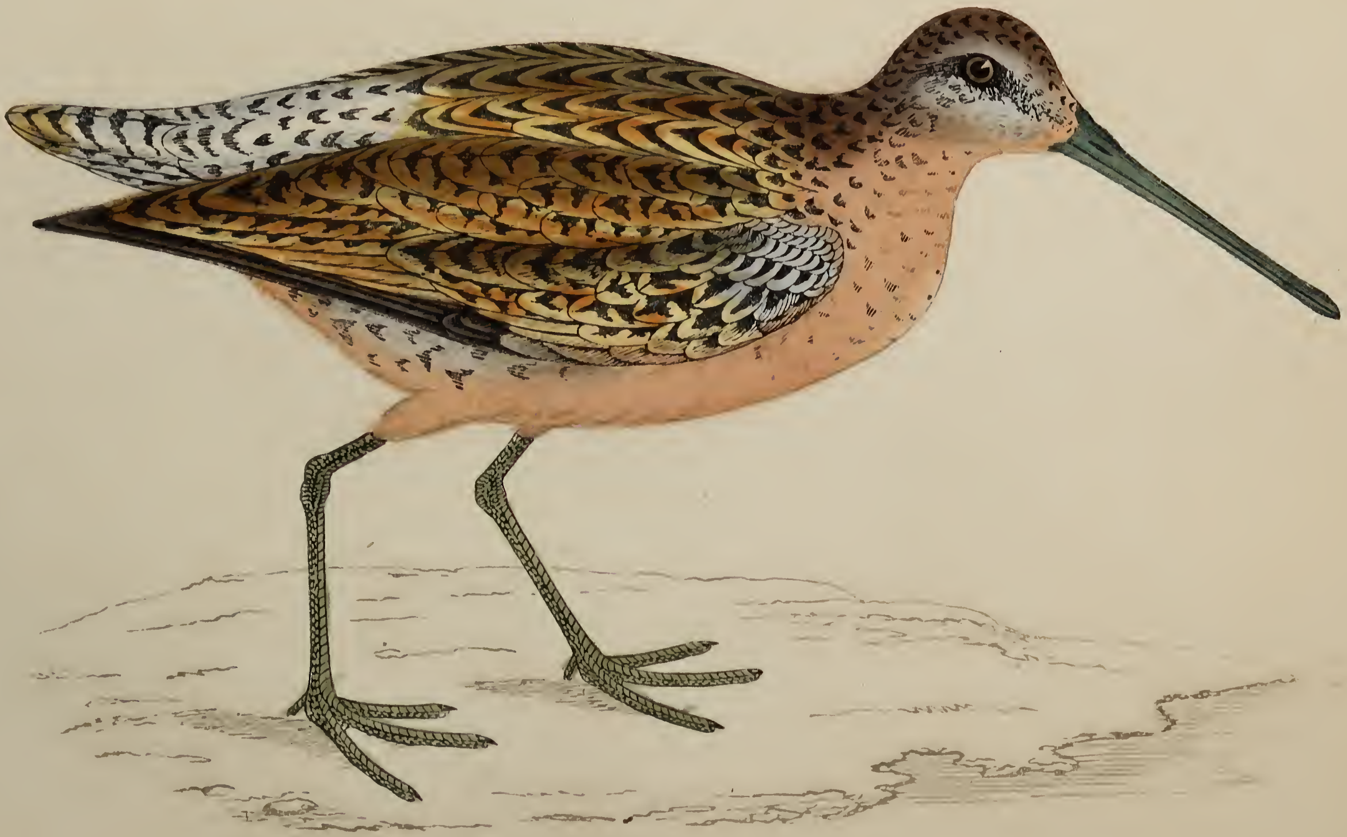
THE late Nicholas Aylworth Vigors, Esq., M.P. for Carlow, received the original specimen of this bird as a British one from the Queen's County, in Ireland, in August, 1822, and named it in honour of Colonel Sabine, the then chairman of the Zoological Society. It was shot near Portarlington, by the Rev. Charles Doyne, on the 22nd. of August in that year. Another was shot in Ireland the end of November, or beginning of December, 1827, on a heathy hill near Garvagh, in the county of Londonderry, the seat of Lord Garvagh, by Captain, afterwards General, Bonhan, then of the 10th. Hussars. Lord Garvagh has frequently seen others in the same locality—one on the 12th. of January, 1853, and again afterwards; also in 1854. Mr. Thompson, in his "Birds of Ireland," gives ten instances of its occurrence.

On the 26th. of October, 1824, another, a female, was killed on the banks of the Medway, near Rochester, Kent. In the year 1836, in the summer, one was shot by the Hon. Mr. Harris, son of Lord Malmesbury, near Heron Court, his Lordship's seat, in Hampshire. Another was obtained near Morpeth, in Northumberland. One appears to have been shot near the River Wharfe, in Yorkshire, on the 14th. of August, 1820, by T. G., of Clitheroe, as recorded in the 'Magazine of Natural History,' volume viii, page 613; and on the 17th. he saw another like it, near Denton Park, the seat of Sir Henry Ibbetson, Bart., on the bank of the same river, one, the beauty of which I have before referred to—O 'River, River!'—'how I love thy silver stream!' One was shot at Tetney, near Grimsby, Lincolnshire, as A. Fuller, Esq. has been so good as inform me; one in Hampshire, recorded in the 'Zoologist,' page 1300. In Sussex one, shot near Chichester harbour, in June, 1845.

Like the Jack Snipe, it appears to have the habit, not being easily alarmed, of returning again, after being disturbed, to the place that it had left.

In general appearance this bird somewhat resembles the Woodcock. Male; length, a little over nine inches and three quarters; bill, dark olivaceous brown, dusky towards the tip, pale reddish or yellowish brown at the base. Head, crown, neck on the back, and nape, dusky reddish, or pale yellowish brown, spotted and barred with black on each feather; chin, throat, and breast, pale dusky yellowish or reddish, spotted and barred with black on each feather. Back above, dusky reddish or yellowish brown, spotted and barred with black on each feather; on the lower part tinged with grey.

The wings have the first quill feather the longest. The greater and lesser wing coverts are dusky brown, partially tinted with pale ferruginous or yellowish brown on each feather; primaries, dusky black, the shafts also black; tertiaries, dusky brown, partially marked across with pale yellowish brown on each feather; greater and lesser under wing coverts, brownish black. The tail, which consists of twelve feathers, is black on the inner half, ferruginous brown towards the tip, spotted and barred with black; the two centre feathers have rather more, and the outer feathers rather less, black than the others; upper tail coverts, greyish brown. Legs, very dark chesnut brown, as are the toes, the two outer of which are united at the base for a short distance; claws, black.



BROWN SNIPE.

BROWN SNIPE.

RED-BREASTED SNIPE. GREY SNIPE. BROWN LONGBEAK.

Scolopax grisea,	PENNANT. MONTAGU.
Scolopax Noveboracensis,	SABINE.
Macroramphus griseus,	EYTON. GOULD.

Scolopax—A Woodcock, or Snipe. *Grisea*............

THIS Snipe, whose triple name denotes its different appearance in summer, autumn, and winter—red, brown, and grey, according to the season of the year, belongs naturally to North America. It is a very abundant species in the Fur Countries, and is found extensively from the borders of Lake Superior to the Arctic Sea. In Europe it has been shot in Sweden, and is included also among the birds of Greenland.

Colonel Montagu was the first to mention the occurrence of this bird in Britain. His specimen was obtained in Devonshire, in the month of October; a second example, according to Dr. Edward Moore and Mr. Bellamy, was subsequently procured in the same county. A third was killed near Carlisle, in the year 1835; a fourth near Yarmouth, Norfolk, on the 12th. of October, 1836; a fifth also near the same place; a sixth in the same county in 1840. A seventh at Runton, and one at Horsey, shot by Mr. Rising, the 9th. of October, 1845.

They migrate northwards the end of April and beginning of May, and return again southwards the end of July, and beginning of August.

They go in flocks, sometimes of very large extent, keeping by themselves, and seldom associating with other species, as may be judged of from the fact that as many as eighty-five have been killed at one shot. They are considered particularly good eating, and numbers are accordingly obtained for the table. They frequent sand-bars, mud-lines, and mud-flats by the sea-side.

On being disturbed they generally rise high in the air, and make several circuitous manœuvres before they descend, wheeling, coursing, and doubling about, then shooting high in the air, and there separating in various bodies.

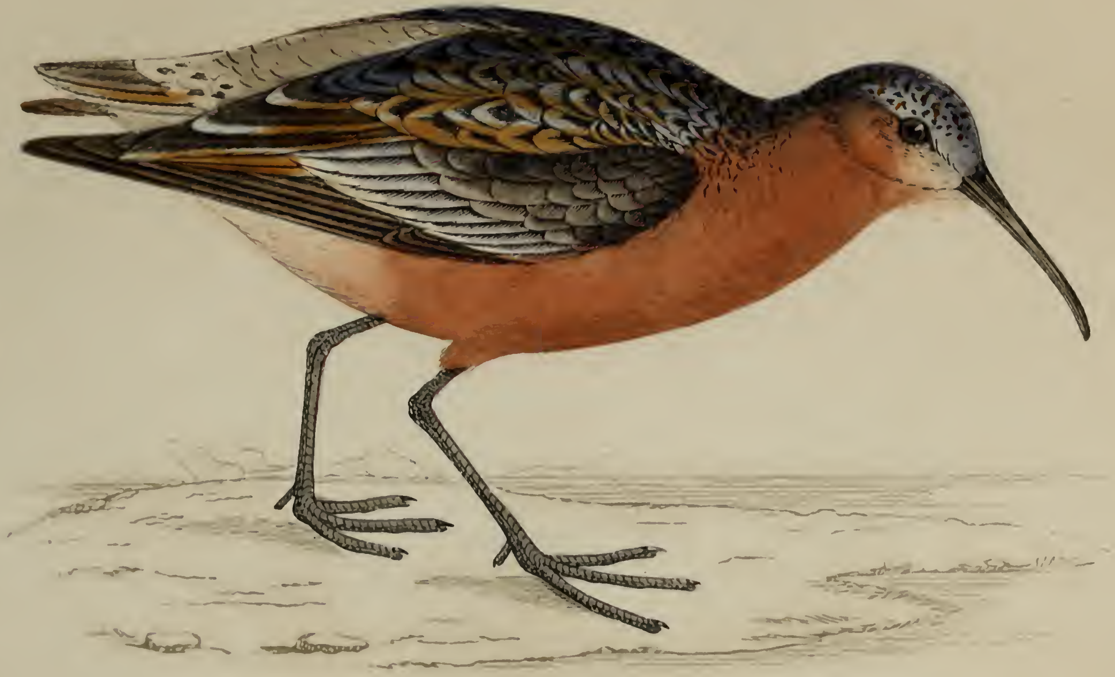
They feed on marine worms and small shell-fish.

They utter, says Wilson, a loud howling whistle.

In singularity of appearance, this Snipe, curious as are our other species, seems to be 'facile princeps.' Male; weight, three ounces and a quarter; length, from ten to eleven inches; bill, dark reddish brown, darker towards the point, at the base deep greenish grey; between it and the eye is a dusky streak, which in winter is white. Iris, dark reddish brown; above it runs a white line tinged with reddish brown. Head on the sides and crown, neck on the back and nape, pale chesnut brown streaked with black, in winter light greyish brown varied with darker brown and dusky black; the sides of the head white; neck on the sides and in front, reddish chesnut spotted and barred with black, in winter grey tinged with brown; chin, in winter, white; throat and breast, pale reddish chesnut, spotted and barred with black, in winter grey tinged with yellowish brown, below white; back on the upper part, nearly black, the feathers beautifully edged and streaked with bright yellowish chesnut; in winter the black colour changes to grey brown, and the grey to white; below it is white, barred across with black; in winter it is nearly white.

The wings have the first quill feather the longest; greater and lesser wing coverts, dusky greyish brown; in the winter dusky and white, the former with paler edges, and slightly tipped with white; primaries, dusky greyish brown; in winter dusky, the shaft of the first white; secondaries, dusky brown, in winter edged and tipped with white; tertiaries, edged and streaked obliquely with bright yellowish chesnut, in winter greyish brown, darkest towards the end, margined with greyish buff white; greater and lesser under wing coverts, white, prettily marked with angular dusky streaks. The tail is of twelve feathers, crossed alternately with bars of black and white, those of the former colour the broadest; in summer it is tinged with rufous, the two middle feathers are rather the longest; upper tail coverts, white, spotted with black, in summer with a rufous tinge; under tail coverts, white tinged with red and spotted with black; in winter the white is dull and the black becomes deep brown; they reach nearly to the end of the tail. Legs and toes, greenish brown, tinged with grey; claws, black.

During the change from the summer plumage to the winter, the bird naturally passes through many shades of dark and grey brown to the grey of the latter season.



CURLEW SANDPIPER.

Kent, near Deal, on the 16th. of August, 1850. One was shot by the late F. F. Foljambe, Esq., October 1st., 1812.

In Scotland, Sir William Jardine, Bart. has found them in Dumfriesshire and on both sides of the Solway, and on the shores of the coast, and the lochs in other parts.

In Ireland, the late William Thompson, Esq., of Belfast, has described them as not uncommon.

They frequent the low, flat, and sandy parts of the coast, and at times resort to the open sides of inland seas, lakes, and ponds.

They migrate by night, and arrive about the end of July.

These birds go in troops, sometimes of considerable numbers. They feed during part of the day, and when the tide comes up too high, retire for a time, but only to return again as soon as the waters have receded. They are by no means shy, and if disturbed, soon fly back to their feeding place. It is said that if suddenly surprised singly, they will lie close to the ground, but if a flock be together they take better care of themselves. They sometimes mix with other birds.

'The flight of the Curlew Tringa is quick, and performed by rapid motions of the sharp-pointed wings, while flying at a high elevation; but skimming when passing low over the water or flats.' They run very fast along the sands of the ocean side. How far better is it to spend a leisure hour in watching the actions of the sea birds in their natural haunts, and so gain health, happiness, and reverence, than to waste time in revelry or mere worldly pleasure, to the lowering of the tone both of the body and the mind. 'The end of that mirth is heaviness,' says the wise man; but the medicine that the open air supplies, surely ''tis the best of any.' In the timely use of it, you may look, with God's blessing, for the 'mens sana in corpore sano.'

These birds feed on shrimps and sandhoppers, small crustacea, insects, and worms, for which they bore in the soft sand. In confinement they are said never to swallow their food without first dipping it in water.

The call-note is a shrill pipe, and is uttered at times on the wing.

The eggs are described as yellowish spotted with brown.

Male; weight, two ounces; length, seven inches and a half to eight and a quarter or even nine; the bill, which is curved downwards, is nearly black, in winter brownish black; the space between it and the eyes is dusky; over it runs a band of bright rust-colour, which in winter becomes grey or white; iris, very dark brown; it is encircled with whitish feathers. Forehead, white, whitish, or mixed with pale reddish brown, according to the time of the year; head on the crown, neck on the back, and nape, bright rust-coloured or chesnut, with black spots and marks on the feathers; in winter the rust-colour fades into grey on the sides of the head, and on the back it is greyish brown, streaked and spotted with darker brown, with a slight olivaceous gloss. Chin, whitish; in winter white; throat and breast above, and on the sides, reddish rust-colour or chesnut, the latter with white edges to the feathers towards winter, and a dusky marking between the two colours; below white, with indistinct rust-coloured or chesnut markings, and arrow-headed black spots and streaks; in winter the chesnut becomes white, yellowish white, or grey, and of this colour is the whole under surface of the body; back above, nearly black, each feather edged with reddish chesnut brown; on the lower part, blackish grey edged with white, gradually paler, and the feathers edged with white; in winter the rust-colour becomes brown with a slight tinge of olivaceous bronze.

The wings, which, when closed, reach a little beyond the tail, have the first quill feather the longest, the axillary plume white; greater wing coverts, dusky grey, the edges paler, the shafts black; in winter the lesser coverts are grey, the centre of the feather rather darker than the rest; lesser wing coverts, nearly black, each feather broadly edged with reddish chesnut or rust-colour; in winter the latter becomes white from yellowish white in autumn; primaries and secondaries, dusky black with white shafts, the latter in winter become edged with white; tertiaries, nearly black, each feather broadly edged with reddish chesnut or rust-colour, which in winter changes to white from yellowish white in autumn. The tail, of twelve feathers, is brownish grey with white tips and shafts to the feathers, those towards the outside paler and clouded, underneath it is greyish white; it is wedge-shaped; upper tail coverts, white, with a few square dusky spots; in winter with or without dusky markings or bars; under tail coverts reddish white, barred and spotted with black spots of an arrow-headed form. The legs, which are rather long, and the toes, greenish black; in winter, greenish brown; claws, black.

While assuming the winter garb the rust-colour is of course more or less intermingled with the blackish brown.

The young have the eye-streak white; forehead, white; crown, blackish brown, bordered with greyish white; neck in front, white; on the back, greyish white, with streaks of a deeper tint; throat and breast above, yellowish grey, below white; back, light brown, with a glossy reflection, the feathers margined with white and reddish white, with greyish ash-coloured feathers more or less intermixed. Tail, grey, margined with white; upper and under tail coverts, white.

KNOT.

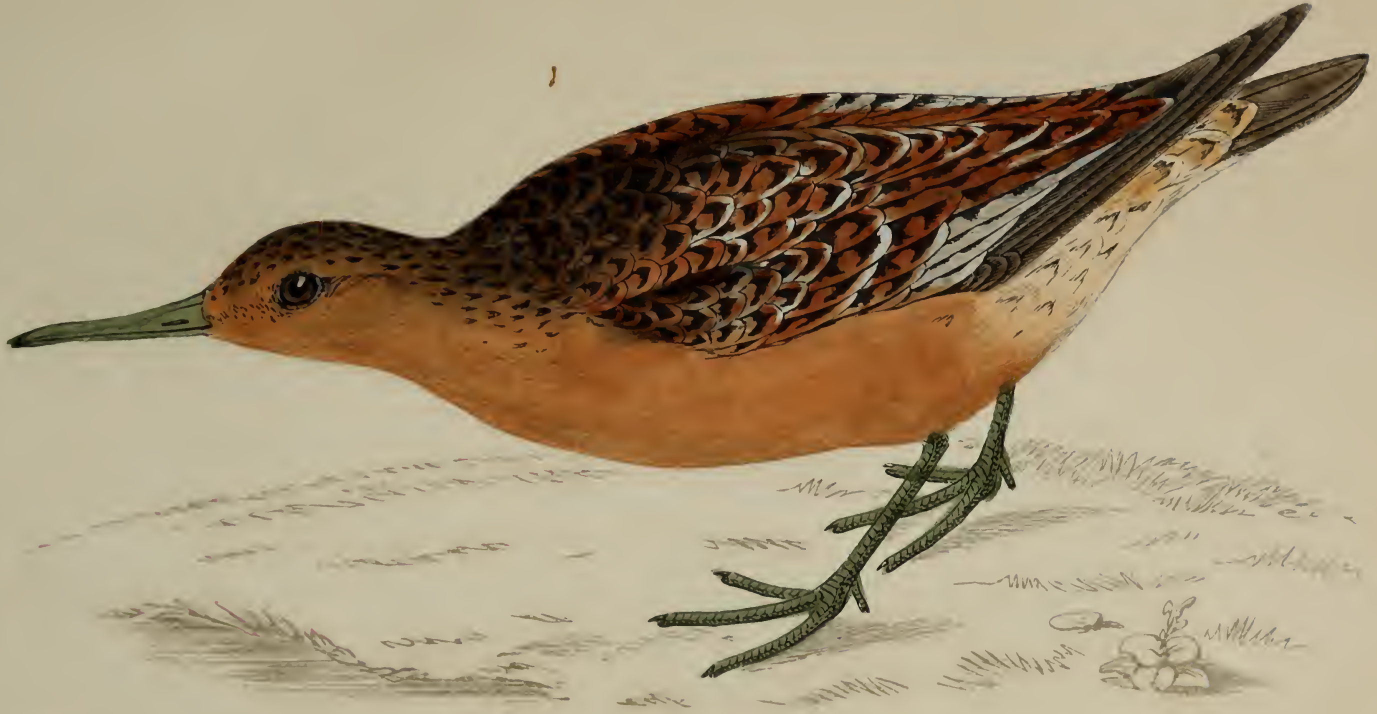
RED SANDPIPER. ASH-COLOURED SANDPIPER.

Tringa Canutus,	MONTAGU.
" *Islandica,*	PENNANT.
" *cinerea,*	TEMMINCK.
Calidris Canutus,	FLEMING.

Tringa—...........? *Canutus*—Canute.

THE Knot, according to Camden, derives its specific Latin name from 'King Canutus,' with whom it is reported to have been a favourite dish; I do not, however, find any reference to the matter in the ballad under the above title in Percy's 'Reliques of Ancient British Poetry,' in which, in school days, I used to 'read, and read, and read again' of 'Sir Andrew Barton, Knight,' 'The Nut-browne Maid,' 'The Gaberlunzie Man,' 'Chevy Chase,' 'The Heir of Linne,' 'Fair Rosamond,' 'The Sturdy Rock,' 'Brave Lord Willoughby,' 'The Winning of Cales,' 'The Wandering Jew,' 'The Spanish Lady's Love,' 'Admiral Hosier's Ghost,' 'The Beggar's Daughter of Bednal Green,' 'Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne,' 'Adam Bell, Clym o' the Clough, and William of Cloudesley,' 'The Child of Elle,' 'King Cophetua and the Beggar Maid,' 'My Mind to Me a Kingdome is,' 'King Lear and his three Daughters,' 'The Dragon of Wantley,' 'Gentle River, Gentle River,' etc., etc., etc.; it was then a very scarce book, but a new edition of it has since been published, and some of the poems are very beautiful.

The Knot advances north to the Arctic regions, and there rears its young. M. Nilsson says that it inhabits in Europe the northerly parts of Sweden and Norway, in summer, and



KNOT.

the same appears to be the case in Finland; also in Holland, France, and Germany. It occurs likewise in America, even to the Polar regions, and in Asia; and rears its young within the Arctic circle. It is enumerated by Captain Sabine among the birds inhabiting Greenland and Spitzbergen. Sir William Jardine says that he has seen a specimen from New Holland that appears in every way identical.

Dr. Fleming mentions one killed in the Isle of Sanday, one of the Orkneys, on the 15th. of June, 1808. Vast flocks arrive on our eastern shores in the autumn. In Lincolnshire it used to be extremely abundant.

In Ireland it is a regular autumnal visitant; also in Scotland, among other places, between Aberdeen and Peterhead.

This species generally arrives in Orkney in September. One was killed by Mr. Strang, August 20th., 1811; several were shot by the same gentleman on August 26th., 1843, September 7th., 1837, and in October, 1831. They often appear in large flocks.

On the 4th. of February, 1851, I shot one of these birds, when in company with my friend the Rev. R. P. Alington, on the Lincolnshire side of the Humber. It was one of a flock, very wild, and one of the longest shots I ever made; neither of us will soon forget the walk we took that day. A specimen, of which W. Brooks Gates, Esq. has written me word, was shot at Pattishall, in Northamptonshire, the first week in February, 1855; in Surrey, one near Godalming, in December, 1854. In Cornwall, it is not uncommon near Falmouth, at Gwyilyn Vase and Swanpool.

These birds frequent the low mouths of rivers, the sides of bays, and other flat parts of the coast.

They are of migratory habits, departing in April and May, to arrive again early in the autumn, in August, from the north.

On their first arrival in the autumn they are extremely tame, and are easily procured; afterwards, however, they learn to be more wary; and in the end become extremely wild; during high water they retire to any neighbouring dry land. They have been observed to swim with great ease. They are valued for the table, and as they occur with us in considerable numbers, are sold pretty extensively in the markets. They used to be taken, Bewick says, in nets, into which they were inveigled by wooden figures of birds painted in their own resemblance. Pennant says that as many as fourteen dozen have been taken at once. They are kept without much difficulty in confinement.

They fly with much power, and with little apparent exertion, straight forward, with regular strokes of the wings, and commonly not high above the surface. On the ground they also move about nimbly.

They feed on marine insects and their larvæ, and the smaller shell-fish. These they seek for early and late in the day, and during moonlight nights, reposing, or moving about but little while the sun is up.

The note is only a 'twee, twee,' expressed in a sharp high tone.

A tuft of grass serves as a depository for the eggs.

They are stated to be four in number, of a light yellowish brown colour, marked at the larger end with grey and reddish spots, forming more or less of a belt, and less spotted towards the smaller end.

Male; weight, about four ounces and a half; length, towards ten inches; bill, dusky black at the tip, fading into reddish at the base; between it and the eye is a dusky streak, and a white one over the eye in winter. Iris, hazel; forehead, reddish brown streaked with dark brown, in winter white; head on the sides, chesnut red with a few dark brown spots before and behind the eye, in winter the former colour becomes white; on the crown, neck on the back, and nape, reddish brown, streaked with dark brown or black, and interspersed with specks of white, in winter light brownish grey with the shafts of the feathers darker, and so on the front and sides of the neck. Chin, throat, and breast, rich reddish chesnut, in winter white, the latter slightly streaked across with grey, and waved with the same on the sides. Back, blackish on the centre of the feathers, which are barred and varied with reddish brown, and margined and tipped with white, in winter it is greyish ash-colour with the feather shafts darker, the lower part white.

The wings have the first quill feather the longest; they extend in their stretch to one foot seven inches; greater wing coverts, greyish ash-colour, in winter tipped with white, forming a bar across the wings when extended; lesser wing coverts, dusky black with reddish brown and white margins to the feathers, in winter greyish ash-colour, and the white tips form a bar across the wing. Primaries, greyish or brownish black, with broad white shafts, the inner webs paler; secondaries, edged with white; tertiaries, long, and deep blackish brown, irregularly margined with reddish brown and yellowish white, in winter white. The feathers of the tail are dark ash brown colour, finely edged with yellowish white or white, the outer feathers paler, the shafts also yellowish white—it is of a square shape; upper tail coverts, white tinged with red and edged with white, and with crescent-shaped bars of deep brown or black, in winter white barred in the same way; under tail coverts, white, tinged with red and spotted with black, in winter white. The legs, which are short, and feathered very nearly to the knees, are, as the toes, which are divided without any connecting membrane, bluish black, in winter blackish grey; the hind one turns inward.

The female is not so bright in colour.

The young of the first year have the head, crown, neck on the back, and nape, greyish ash-colour, each feather with a semicircular band of greyish black, and outside is another of buff white, which colour appears to tint the whole, and becomes pure white later on in the year, the shafts dark. Chin and throat, white streaked with grey; breast, dull white, tinged with pale reddish buff; back, greyish ash-colour, each feather with two bands of a semicircular shape, the inner one greyish black, the outer buff white, fading, later in the season, into pure white. Primaries, secondaries, and tertiaries, paler than in the adult bird.

A white variety of the Knot was shot near Maldon, in Essex, the 13th. of February, 1851.

BARTRAM'S SANDPIPER

Totanus Bartramii, TEMMINCK.

Totanus—..... ...... *Bartramii*—Of Bartram.

THIS Sandpiper ranges from Canada through the United States of America to Mexico, and is common throughout the whole region. Occasional wanderers have arrived in Europe; and one was obtained in Australia, at Botany Bay, as erroneously so called, being almost destitute of the remarkable vegetation which abounds in other neighbouring districts, as erroneously imagined to be the 'locus penitentiæ,' the latter word, I fear, more to be translated in the sense of penance than penitence, of those who 'leave their country for their country's good.'

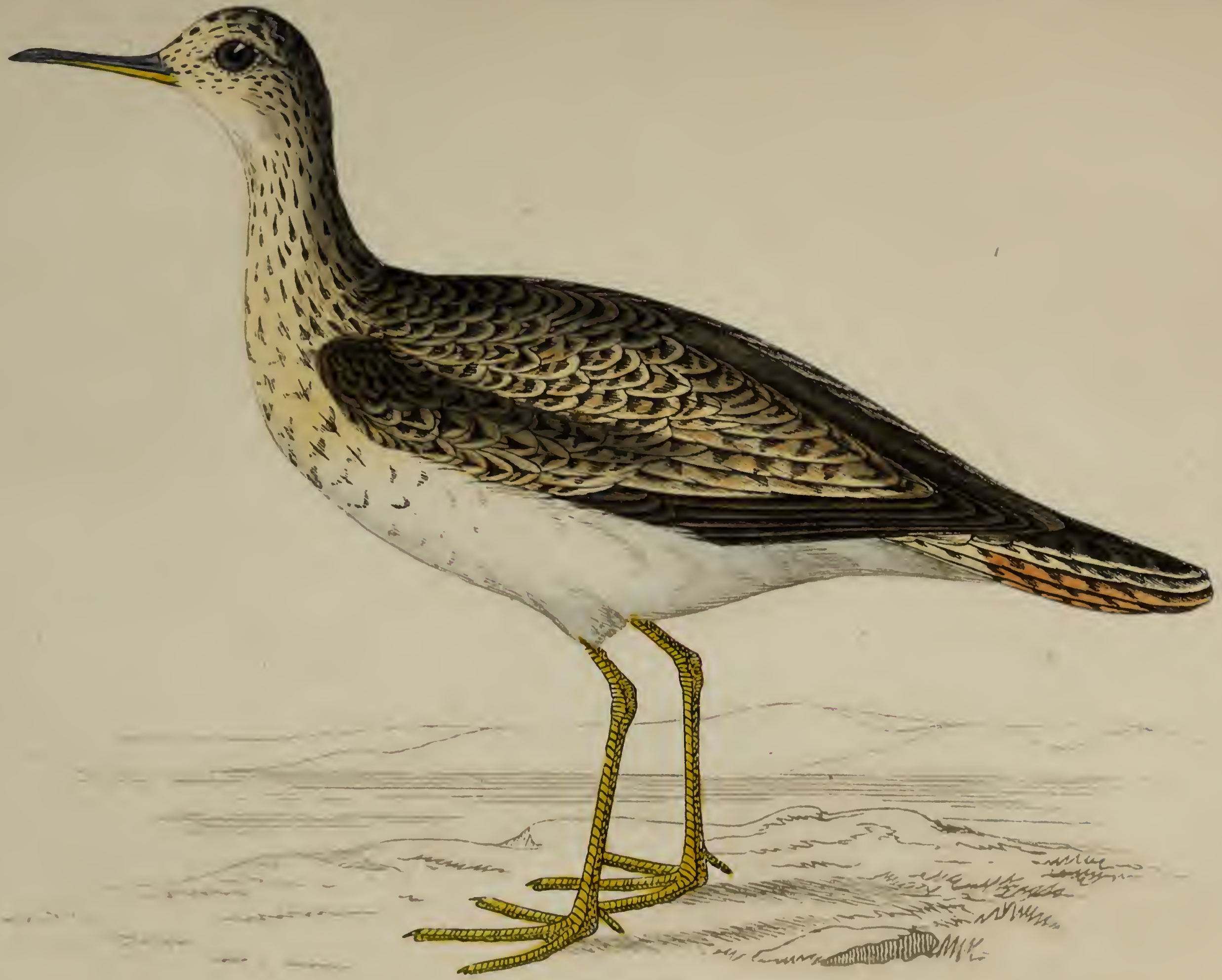
In England, one specimen was shot in a stubble field near Warwick, in October, 1851, and was discriminated as being a new British Bird, by Mr. Hugh Reid, of Doncaster. The next was shot in Cambridgeshire, December the 18th., 1854, in a ploughed field between Cambridge and Newmarket: Frederick Tearle, Esq., of Trinity Hall, Cambridge, to whom it was sent, has been so kind as to send me an account of its occurrence. A third is stated in the 'Illustrated London News,' by a person signing himself N. S. R., to have been shot by him at Bigswear, on the banks of the Wye, in Gloucestershire, on the 19th. of January, 1855.

This species appears to frequent inland places, even though devoid of water. It is a bird of graceful form and appearance.

It flies about, if disturbed, in large circles; and runs quickly on the ground.

The note is a whistling cry.

The bird before us appears, in some respects, a connecting link between the Plovers and Sandpipers. Male; length, about



BARTRAM'S SANDPIPER.

one foot and half an inch; bill, slender, and slightly curved towards the tip, the upper mandible deep brown, the lower one light brown, dark at the point. Head on the sides and crown, brown, the feathers edged with buff, the latter colour shewing more on the sides; neck on the back, brownish buff, minutely spotted with dark brown; chin, white; throat, buff white, the dark centres of the feathers forming lines of spots; breast, buff white, with dark brown arrow-head shaped markings near the tip of each feather, growing paler below till it ends in white. Back dark olive brown, each feather edged with buff.

The wings reach in expanse to the width of two feet, or a trifle over; greater and lesser wing coverts, dark olive brown, each feather edged with buff; primaries, brownish lead-colour, the broad web towards the quill white, banded and marked with blackish brown, the shaft of the first primary only white, the rest black, the tips minutely edged with buff; tertiaries, brownish lead-colour edged with buff, each feather marked with bands of dark brown, ending in black spots near the buff border, and with a black patch at the tip minutely edged with buff. The tail is wedge-shaped, the shafts of the feathers are black, the webs grey brown, shading off into a whitish buff border, with a row of black spots all round, the feathers on each side bright fawn-colour, the shafts and edges paler, with a similar row of black spots, the last feather outside white barred with black; all the tail feathers, except the two outer ones, have a large black patch at the tip, with the remainder about it white; under tail coverts, white The legs are bare of feathers some way above the knee joint.

BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER.

Tringa rufescens, SELBY. JENYNS.

Tringa—..........? *Rufescens*—Inclining to red.

M. VIELLOT was the first to establish the specific identity of this species. It is common in North and South America, which is its true country, occurring in Canada, and even farther up, and thence in Louisiana, and near New York and Boston, and in Brazil and other parts. It has, in Europe, been found in France.

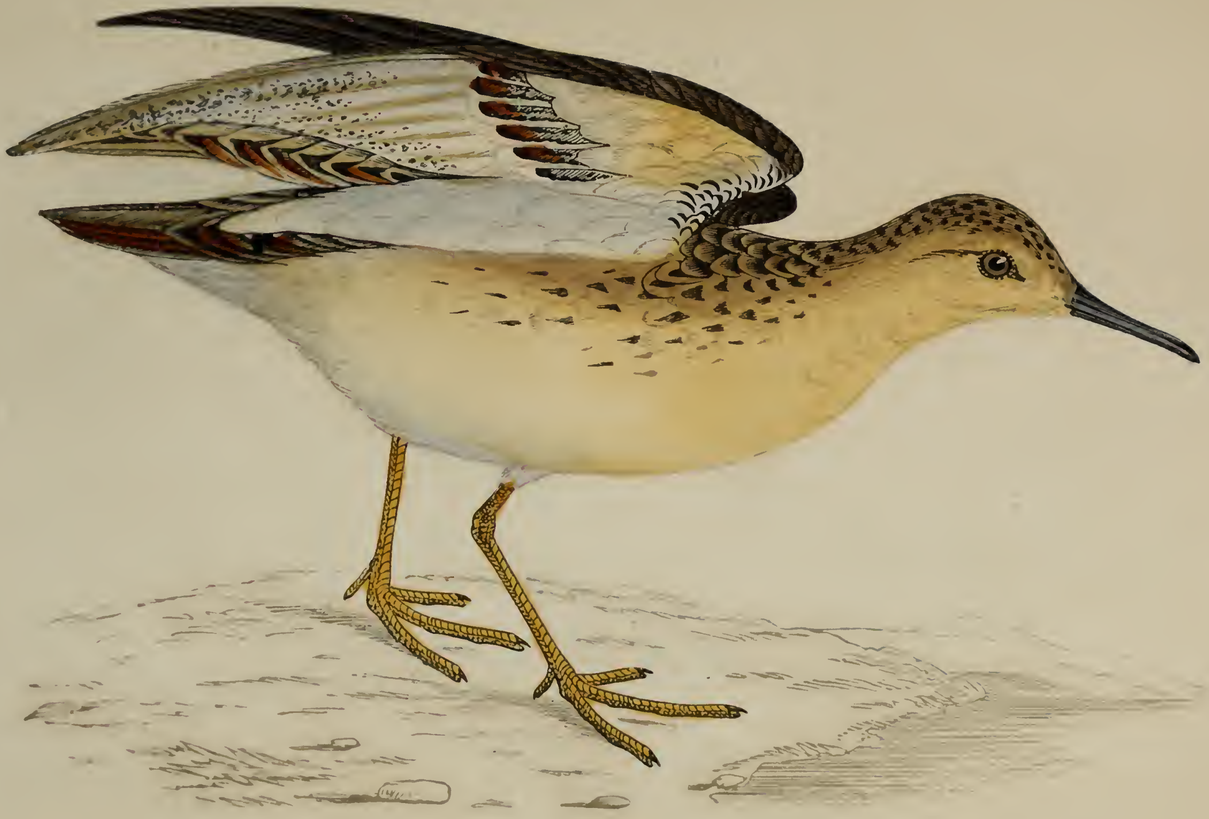
In England, one, the first 'Pioneer' on record of others to this, to them, New England, was shot early in the month of September, in the year 1826, in the parish of Melbourne, in Cambridgeshire; the next was obtained at Sherringham, on the coast of Norfolk, a few years subsequently; a third at Formby, on the bank of the River Alt, in Lancashire, and a fourth at Yarmouth, in Norfolk, in the autumn of 1839 or 1840; others have at different times been procured along the coast in the same county—one September 22nd., 1841, and another on Breydon, September 20th., 1843. One also in Cornwall, on the sea-coast between Penzance and Marazion, September 3rd., 1846. One, of which Stephen Stone, Esq., of Brighthampton, has informed me, was met with on some low land through which the Isis flows, near Bampton, in Oxfordshire.

In Ireland one was obtained in Dublin Bay.

The localities frequented by this species are the banks of rivers or the sea-shore. It does not appear to be shy of consorting with birds of other kinds.

It feeds on aquatic and other insects, grasshoppers, and small worms.

Male; weight, two ounces and a half; length, about eight



BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER.

inches; bill, slender and very slightly curved, and dull greenish olive black in colour, dusky towards the point. Iris, hazel; head on the sides, light yellowish red; on the crown, dark brown approaching to black, each feather edged with very light brown, giving it a mottled appearance; neck on the sides, light brown tinged with buff, and spotted with dark centres to the feathers; on the back and nape, light brown, with minute dark spots on the centre of each feather; chin, throat, and breast above, light brown with a tinge of buff, and spotted with small spots of dusky on the centres of the feathers; the breast below is white; back, very dark or blackish brown, on the centres and edges of the feathers lighter—greyish yellow.

The wings have the first quill feather the longest; the axillary plume is white; greater wing coverts, dusky greyish brown, with broad buff-coloured edges; lesser wing coverts, dusky greyish brown with buff-coloured edges; a band is thus formed across the wing. Primaries, greenish black towards the end, the remainder greyish brown, the inner webs whitish on the greater part of their length, and beautifully dotted with black in undulating lines, tipped with white; underneath they are silvery white on the shafts, and beautifully mottled with dark specks; the outer half of the inner webs, which are of a pale brown ground colour, have the outer webs dusky, forming transverse rays of black; secondaries, dusky, mottled at their base, the edges of the inner ones greyish yellow; underneath elegantly variegated with bands of black, dusky, and white, which, when the wings are raised, give the bird an appearance peculiar to itself; tertiaries, dusky or blackish brown edged with light brown; greater and lesser under wing coverts, white, those near the edge of the wing black in the centre. The tail, wedge-shaped, has the centre feathers blackish brown, glossed with green towards the end, with lighter edges, tips, and shafts, those on the sides gradually lighter brown, enclosed in black, and edged and tipped with white; upper tail coverts, brown with lighter or buff-coloured edges to the feathers; under tail coverts, white, but pervaded with a tinge of buff, the shafts of the feathers black. The legs, bare of feathers for half an inch above the knee joint, are dull yellowish green; toes, dull yellowish green; claws, dusky black.

The female is paler in colour.

BROAD-BILLED SANDPIPER.

Tringa platyrhyncha, GOULD. TEMMINCK.

Tringa—............? *Platyrhyncha*. *Platūs*—Broad. *Rūnchos*—A beak, or bill.

EVEN on the continent this appears to be a rather rare species, but it has been met with in the north in Norway and Lapland, as well as southwards in Germany, Italy, and France, likewise in Switzerland, according to Schinz, a naturalist whose great merits appear to me to be by no means so well known in this country as they should be. According to M. Temminck it is also found on several of the islands of the Indian Archipelago—Borneo, Sumatra, and Timor, for instance.

With us one was killed in Norfolk, upon one of the flats at Breydon Broad, near Yarmouth, on the 25th. of May, 1836; and one near Shoreham, Sussex, in October, 1845, as recorded in the 'Zoologist,' page 1394, by W. Borrer, Esq.

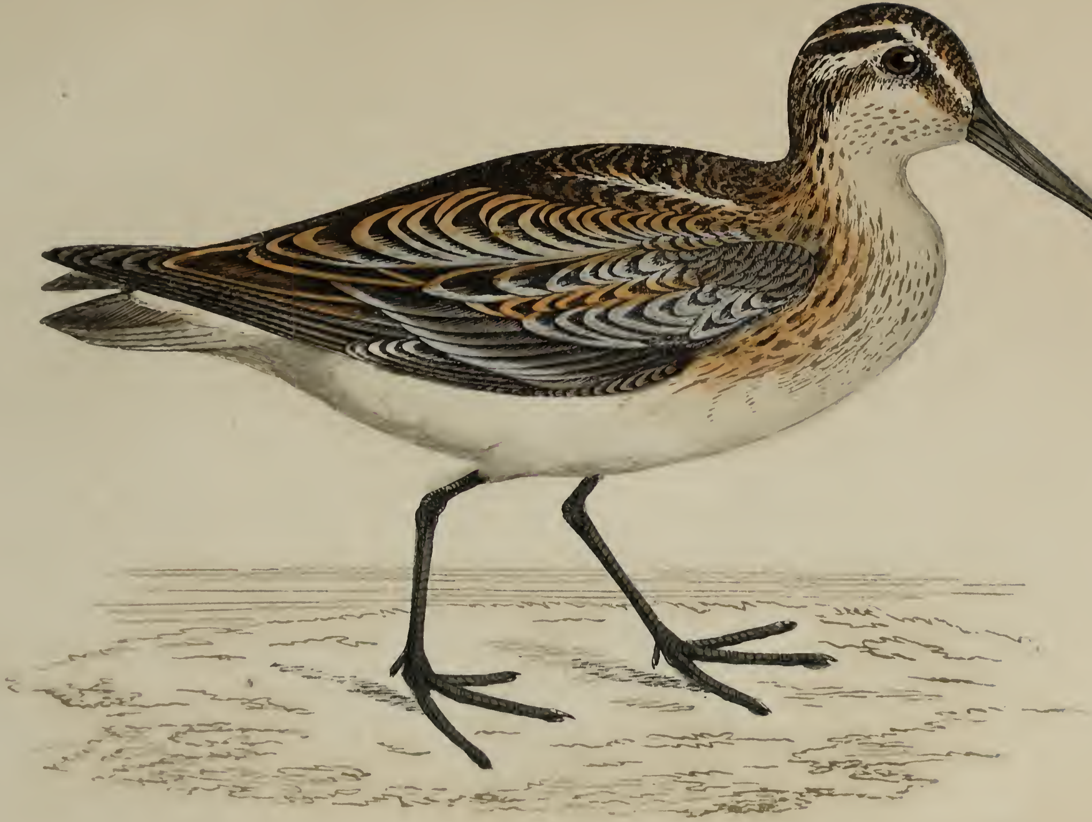
In Ireland it has once been obtained near Belfast.

They are wild and shy in their habits, except towards the nesting time, when their manners entirely change, and they skulk about in the neighbourhood, and if they fly at all soon settle down again. They keep together in small colonies, and frequent the borders of small pools and lakes in the midst of wild morasses, where they are but seldom able to be detected, and these even on very elevated ground, as much as three thousand feet above the level of the sea. They mix on the shore with other species.

If disturbed at ordinary times, they soar to a great height in the air.

The note resembles the syllables 'too who,' quickly repeated.

It is late in laying its eggs; they have been found not yet sat upon on the 24th. of June, and the young still



BROAD-BILLED SANDPIPER.

unable to fly the last week in the following month The nest is placed in a hummock of grass.

The eggs are, in general, of a deep chocolate colour, sometimes spotted and mottled with a darker shade of the same. They are four in number.

Male; length, not quite six inches and a half; the bill, which is 'par excellence,' and that no doubt literally, for, as in all such cases, it is sure to be adapted and best adapted to the peculiar individuality and idiosyncrasy of the bird, its separate and appropriate characteristic, is dark brown towards the point, and inclining to reddish brown at the base; from it a dark brown streak goes back to the eye, and over it and extending over the eye a white one with a brown central longitudinal line. Iris, brown; head on the crown, brownish black slightly varied with greyish white, and tinged with ferruginous; neck on the sides and in front, greyish white varied with black spots, and tinged with buff red; chin, nearly white, with minute white specks; throat and breast on the upper part, greyish white with black spots, and tinged with buff red; below white. Back on the lower part, black with broad buff white or rufous margins to the feathers.

The wings have the first quill feather the longest; greater and lesser wing coverts, black with wide buff white or rufous edges to the feathers; primaries and secondaries, black with white shafts; tertiaries, black, the feathers broadly margined with buff white or rufous. The tail is ash grey, with buff margins to the feathers, except the two middle ones, which, longer also than the others, are nearly black, and tipped and margined with rufous; upper tail coverts, black with rufous edges; under tail coverts, white. Legs and toes, greenish black.

The engraving is from a drawing by J. Gatcombe, Esq.

LITTLE STINT.

LITTLE SANDPIPER. BROWN SANDPIPER. MINUTE DUNLIN.
LEAST SNIPE.

Tringa pusilla,	PENNANT. MONTAGU.
Pelidna minuta,	STEPHENS.

Tringa—...........? *Pusilla*—Small—little.

THIS bird was first described as British by Pennant, from a specimen killed in Cambridgeshire. They are now frequently noticed on the southern and eastern coasts in flocks of thirty, forty, or fifty—in Devonshire, Sussex, Suffolk, Norfolk, and also on those of Yorkshire and Durham. They have likewise been observed on the Lancashire shore, and on the banks of the Solway Firth. Two were obtained at Scilly the first week in September, 1851. It is uncommon in Cornwall, met with at Pennance, Gwyllyn Vase, and Swanpool, near Falmouth.

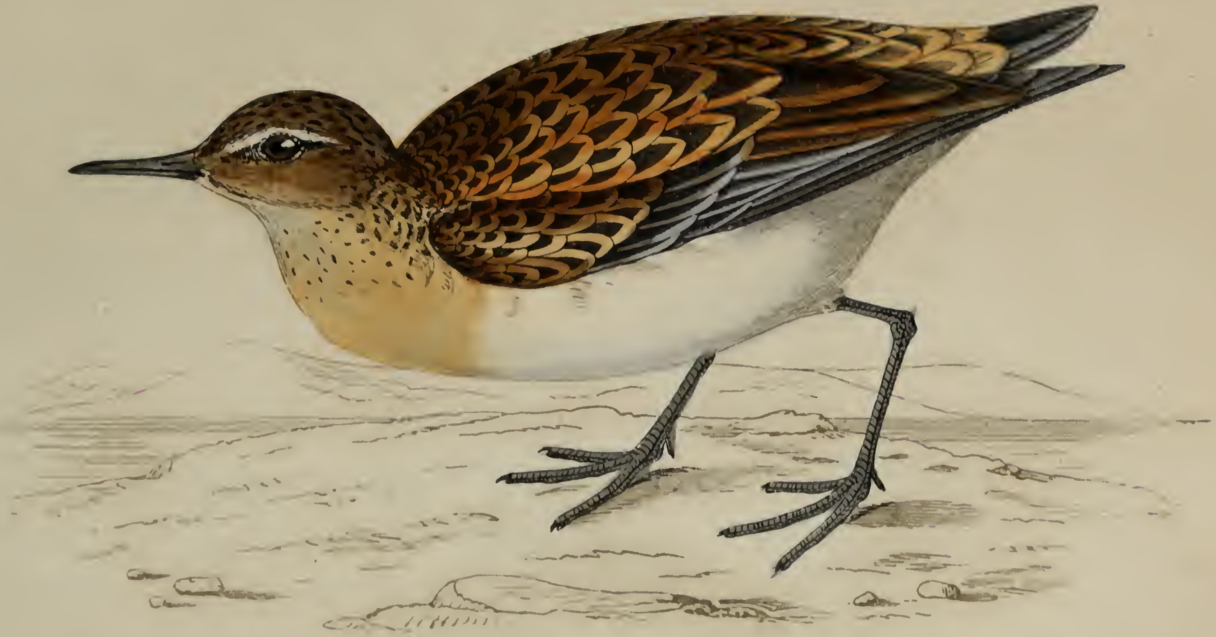
In Scotland one is recorded by Mr. T. Edward, of Banff, in 'The Naturalist' for February, 1855, to have been obtained at Fraserburgh, on the 26th. of September, 1854.

In Ireland they occur annually near Belfast, as recorded by the late William Thompson, Esq., of that place, also near Dublin, but unusually.

In Orkney one was killed by William Strang, Esq., in October, 1837, and another was seen by him in 1848.

In Europe they are found in Sweden, Germany, Holland, Dalmatia, Italy, and France; also in Africa, both north and south; and in Asia—in Persia, India, and the neighbourhood of the Caucasian Mountains.

The Stint most frequently is found along the shores of the sea, but also on the banks of rivers and lakes.



LITTLE STINT.

It is of migratory habits, going northwards in the spring, and south in the autumn.

They appear not to be shy of approach, and go in small flocks, mixing at times with other species of shore birds.

Meyer says that they sleep in the early part of the day, and if come near to, run a little distance very quickly, and then take wing. They are kept in confinement without difficulty.

'The flight of this species is quick, but rather unsteady, and with arched wings.'

It feeds on the smaller water insects, mollusks, and worms.

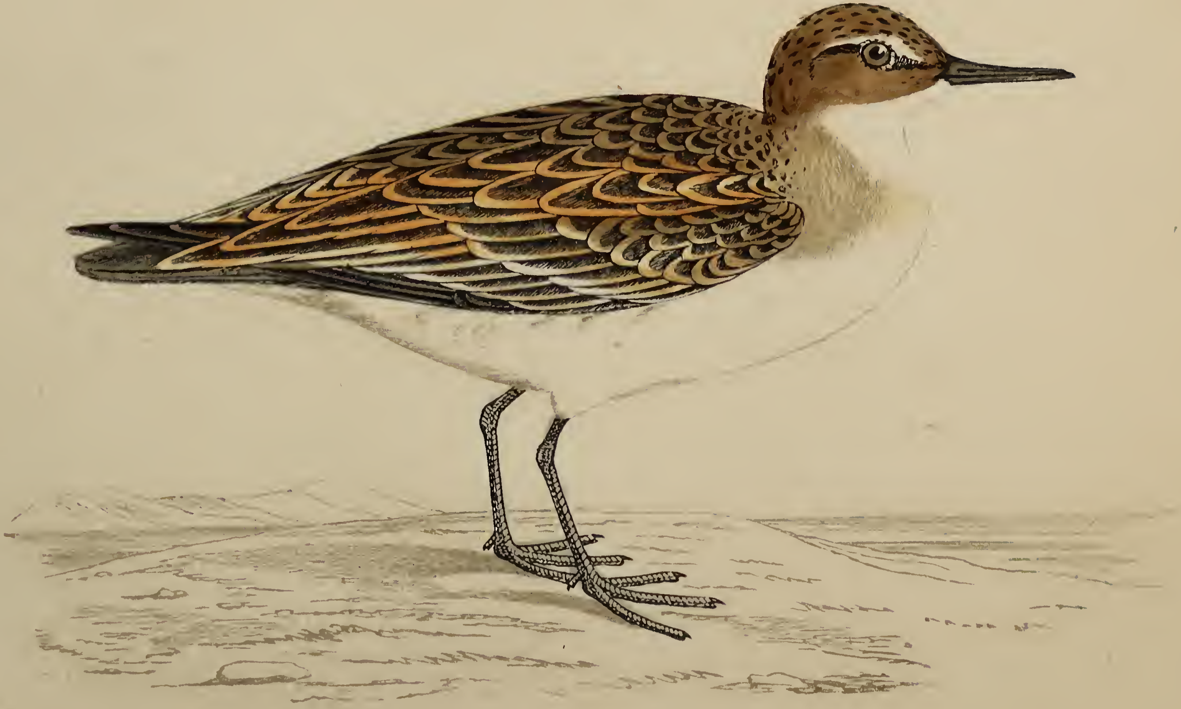
The note seems to resemble the syllables 'deer, deer,' according to one account; but according to another is like its own name, thence perhaps derived, 'stint, stint.'

Male; weight, twelve pennyweights, troy; length, nearly six inches; bill, black, very slender, and bent a little downwards; from its base to the eye and behind it is a dusky brown streak in autumn and winter; iris, dark brown; above and below it is a buff-coloured streak, greyish white in autumn. Forehead and sides of the head, buff, the latter spotted with dusky brown, in autumn grey, in winter white; head on the crown, neck on the back and sides, and nape, ferruginous, with specks of black; these in autumn and the neck on the sides are pale rufous grey streaked with darker, and with a dusky band across the bottom of the neck in front; in winter still paler; chin and throat, white spotted with brown, and the feathers margined with yellowish brown, in autumn grey, in winter white, as it is below at all times; breast above, pale rufous, below white. The back has the feathers dusky black in the centre, with broad ferruginous margins, fading to buff in the autumn, and in the winter to grey.

The wings have the first feather the longest; the axillary plume white; they expand to rather more than eleven inches. Greater and lesser wing coverts, black on the centres of the feathers, broadly edged with ferruginous, changing to buff in the autumn, and in winter to white; primaries, deep brown or black, in autumn dusky with white shafts, and very slightly tipped with white; secondaries, also nearly black tipped with white, and edged in autumn; the tertiaries, deep brown or black in the centre, with wide ferruginous margins, fading into buff in the autumn, and in winter grey brown with lighter-coloured margins. The tail, of twelve feathers, double forked, (reminding one of the boast of the American that in his country they have, among other superiorities, 'forkeder lightning' than we happen to enjoy as British,) that is, the two middle ones and the outer one on each side being longer than the others, is ash grey brown, the central feathers being much darker and glossy, with reddish white edges, in autumn grey margined with buff white, in winter narrowly edged with white, the three outside feathers pure white; upper tail coverts, dusky black with broad ferruginous margins, in autumn dark brown edged with dull reddish brown; under tail coverts, white. The legs, which are slender, and the toes, blackish grey; the outer one very slightly connected at the base by a membrane to the middle one; claws, dull black.

Of course in the present, as in other similar instances, the changes of plumage from that of summer to that of winter, present great intermediate varieties.

In the young of the first year the black is brown, and the margins of the feathers buff at first soon change into nearly white. The eye streak is more distinct than in the old bird.



PEEP.

PEEP.

LITTLE PEEP.

Tringa pusilla,	LINNÆUS.
" *minutilla,*	VIELLOT.

Tringa—...........? *Pusilla*—Small, diminutive.

THIS is another North American species, occurring from Labrador to New York and the States generally; and so on to Carolina and Florida.

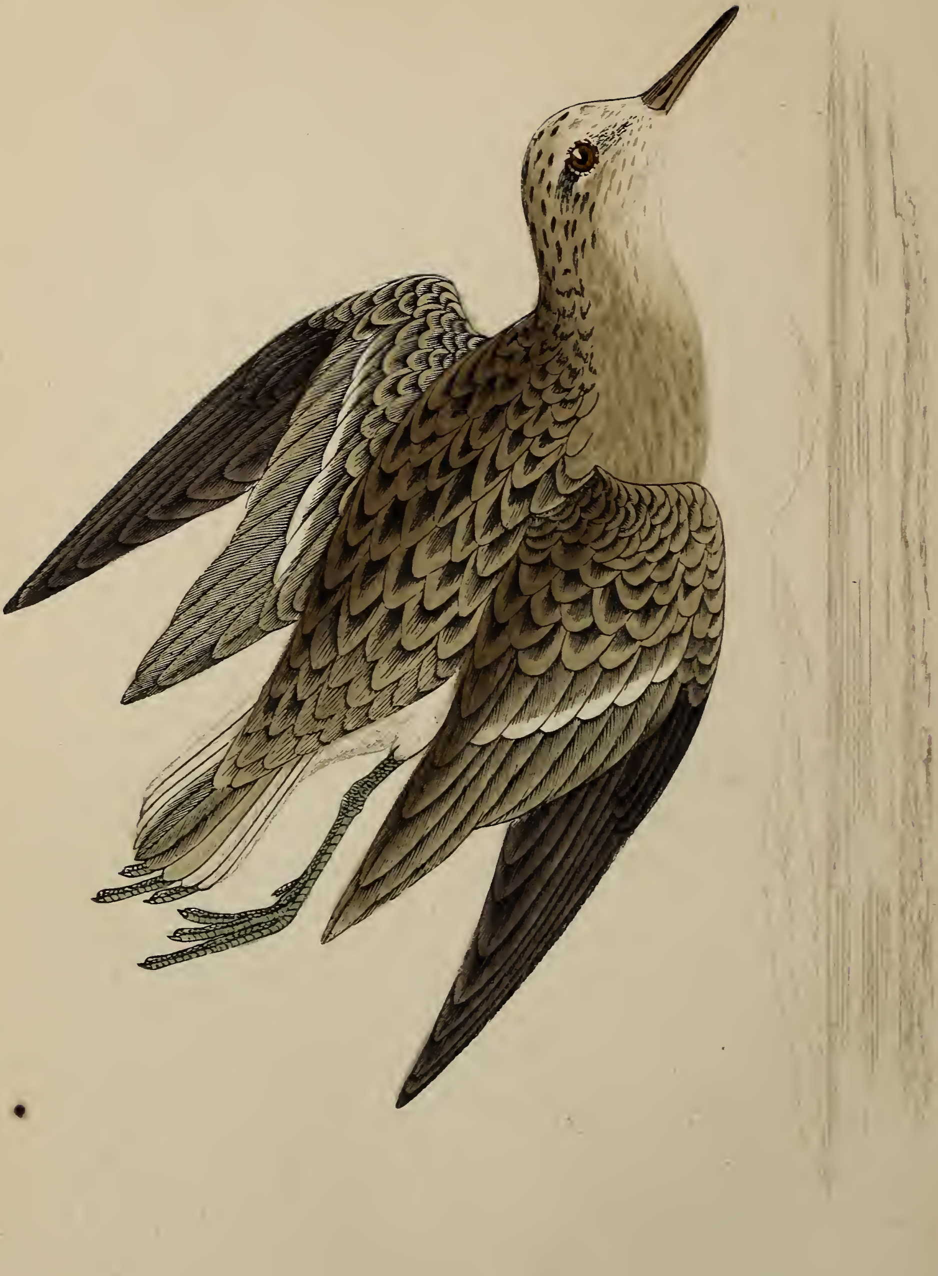
A specimen was shot in this country at the end of May, 1856, near Penzance, in Cornwall, by Mr. W. S. Vingoe, of that place, so that in future it may be enquired for as well in the 'Home' as in the 'Foreign' department, and indeed may very likely have been overlooked in previous instances.

It frequents the sea-shore, the surge washing up the worms, small insects, and other things which suffice it for food.

The note resembles the name of the bird, thence given to it.

Male; length, seven inches and a half; bill, blackish, the tip depressed: over the eye is a white streak. Head on the crown, neck on the back, and nape, dark reddish brown, the feathers bordered with chesnut and pale yellowish brown; chin, white; throat, dull brown, with central dark spots; breast, white, clouded with dark brown; back, blackish brown; on the lower part the sides have the feathers tipped with white.

The wings reach to the end of the tail; greater wing coverts, tipped and edged with white; lesser wing coverts, dark reddish brown, bordered with chesnut and pale yellowish brown; of the primaries some are tipped and edged with white, the shafts of the second and third quills pale brown, of the others brownish white; secondaries, tipped and edged with white more extensively; tertiaries, dark reddish brown, with chesnut and pale yellowish brown edges; greater and lesser under wing coverts, white. The tail has the central pair of feathers, which are a quarter of an inch longer than the others, and the three central pairs graduated, blackish brown, edged with brown, the others very pale brown, faintly fringed near the tips with white; upper tail coverts on the sides, white, blotted with black; under tail coverts, white. Legs, dark brown.



TEMMINCK'S STINT.

TEMMINCK'S SANDPIPER. TEMMINCK'S DUNLIN.
LITTLE SANDPIPER.

Tringa Temminckii,	SELBY.
" *pusilla,*	FLEMING.
" *pucilla,*	MONTAGU.

Tringa—............?   *Temminckii*—Of Temminck.

THIS is the smallest of our British Sandpipers. It has been named after M. Temminck, the celebrated naturalist, who was the first to distinguish it from the other.

It is said to have its young in the north of Europe, and is seen during its passages in Italy, Switzerland, France, Germany, and Holland. It also visits North Africa; and in Asia it belongs to Siberia, the northern provinces of Asiatic Russia, India, Himalaya, and the Dukkun, Timor, and other islands of the Indian Archipelago.

Specimens have been obtained in Cornwall, at Swanpool and East Looe; Devonshire; Middlesex, near Kingsbury; Cambridgeshire, on Foulmire Moor; Norfolk; Yorkshire; Cumberland, at Rockcliff Salt Marsh; and Essex.

William Richard Fisher, Esq., of Yarmouth, has written me word that he possesses two specimens of this bird killed at Great Yarmouth, the one in the month of May, and the other he believes in September; and that he knew of four, in all, shot in September and October, 1843; other two, a male and female, were shot in the same county in May, 1830: it seems to occur there not very rarely. In Cornwall it appears to be by no means uncommon in the salt marshes about Penzance and Marazion—a flock of at least a dozen was seen in the middle of August, 1853. In Suffolk two were met with on the banks of the Nede, near Wisbeach, September 3rd., 1851. In Sussex one at Newhaven, on the 5th. of the same month, and two were killed near Chichester in 1826. In Kent, one near Deal, the 5th. of September, 1850.

It performs a spring and autumnal migration, the former to, and the latter from, the north; and these respectively about the latter end of May, or even the beginning of June, it is asserted, and the middle of August. It moves at such seasons by night.

These Sandpipers frequent the borders of lakes, ponds, marshes, and rivers, at a distance inland, but are also sometimes to be found on the sandy edges of creeks of the sea, and along its shores. They are not of a shy nature, but when in company with birds that are, partake of their more nervous manners. They assemble together in smaller or larger flocks, and join also with other species.

Its flight is particularly rapid, and all its motions are quick and lively. It runs about in a horizontal position with the bill pointed downwards.

The prey it feeds on is composed of flies, gnats, beetles, and other insects and their larvæ, mollusca, and worms. It also swallows some sand, and also vegetable substances, but perhaps unwillingly.

The note is only a 'tirrr, tirrr.'

Male; weight, six drachms; length, from five inches and a quarter, or five and a half, to five inches and three quarters; bill, dull black at the tip, and browner at the base; from it to the eye there is a dusky streak, and over it another indistinct streak, which in winter is white. Iris, dark brown; forehead, grey reddish brown, with small black streaks and spots in winter. Head on the crown, neck on the back, and nape, pale ferruginous brown, broadly streaked on each feather angularly with dark brown, in winter ash grey varied with dark brown; neck on the sides, grey reddish brown, with very small longitudinal black streaks and spots; chin, white; throat and breast above, pale brown, spotted with dusky brown and tinged with buff; below, white; the back feathers are black with rufous margins; in winter it is nearly uniform dusky greyish brown tinted with olive, with narrow lighter-coloured edges.

The wings have the first quill feather the longest, but the second almost of the same length; the axillary plume white;

the wings underneath are ash grey. Greater wing coverts, nearly uniform grey, or dusky olive brown, with narrow lighter-coloured margins in winter, and white tips, forming a bar across the wing; lesser wing coverts, dusky with paler edges; primaries, deep dusky brown tinged with olive green, the shafts white, that of the first whiter than those of the others; secondaries, dusky tipped with white; tertiaries, dusky brown. The tail, wedge-shaped, the two central feathers being the longest, and also the darkest in colour and pointed, nearly black, with, in summer, reddish brown, and in winter grey, edges; the next one on each side grey brown, the next grey, and the three outer ones white tinged with light ash grey on the outer webs; the outermost feather on each side the shortest. Upper tail coverts, dusky brown, those next the tail almost black; under tail coverts, white. Legs and toes, olivaceous greenish brown or grey.

The young of the year have the bill not so black as in the mature bird; iris, dark brown; over the eye a streak of white with specks of ash grey. Forehead, white; head, crown, neck on the back, and nape, ash-coloured grey, the feathers ending in dull black, and tipped very narrowly with cream-coloured white; chin, throat, and breast, dull white; back, brown, each feather ended with dark brown and white. Greater and lesser wing coverts, grey brown, each feather ended with a semicircle of dusky black, tipped very narrowly with cream-coloured white; primaries, dusky black edged with white; secondaries, dusky black tipped with white; tertiaries, grey brown with dark shafts and white tips. The tail has the two middle feathers grey brown edged with white, the outer ones white; under tail coverts, dull white. Legs, paler than in the adult bird.

In the 'ad interim' stages of plumage, those, I mean, assumed between the garb put on in winter and that in summer, alternately, there are, as may readily be supposed, a great variety of partial changes.

SCHINZ'S SANDPIPER.

Tringa Schinzii,	BUONAPARTE. EYTON. GOULD.
" "	TEMMINCK.

Tringa—............? *Schinzii*—Of Schinz.

THIS species has been named after M. Schinz, the very eminent naturalist of Switzerland.

It is a native of America, and spreads over the whole of the northern continent, which appears to be its stronghold, throughout the United States, Massachusetts, Kentucky, Maine, and New Jersey, from Florida to Labrador. Meyer says that in Europe it occurs not uncommonly in Denmark, Holstein, and Schleswig, and along the borders of the North Sea and the Baltic.

A specimen, shot near Stoke Heath, Shropshire, was in the collection of Sir Rowland Hill, Bart., as made known to the public by the late Thomas Eyton, Esq., of Eyton.

These birds, according to Charles Lucien Buonaparte, the Prince of Canino, frequent the borders of lakes, marshy places, creeks, sand-bars, and brackish waters.

In the earlier part of the season they are by no means shy, but they become so afterwards, whether in flocks by themselves, or associated with other allied species.

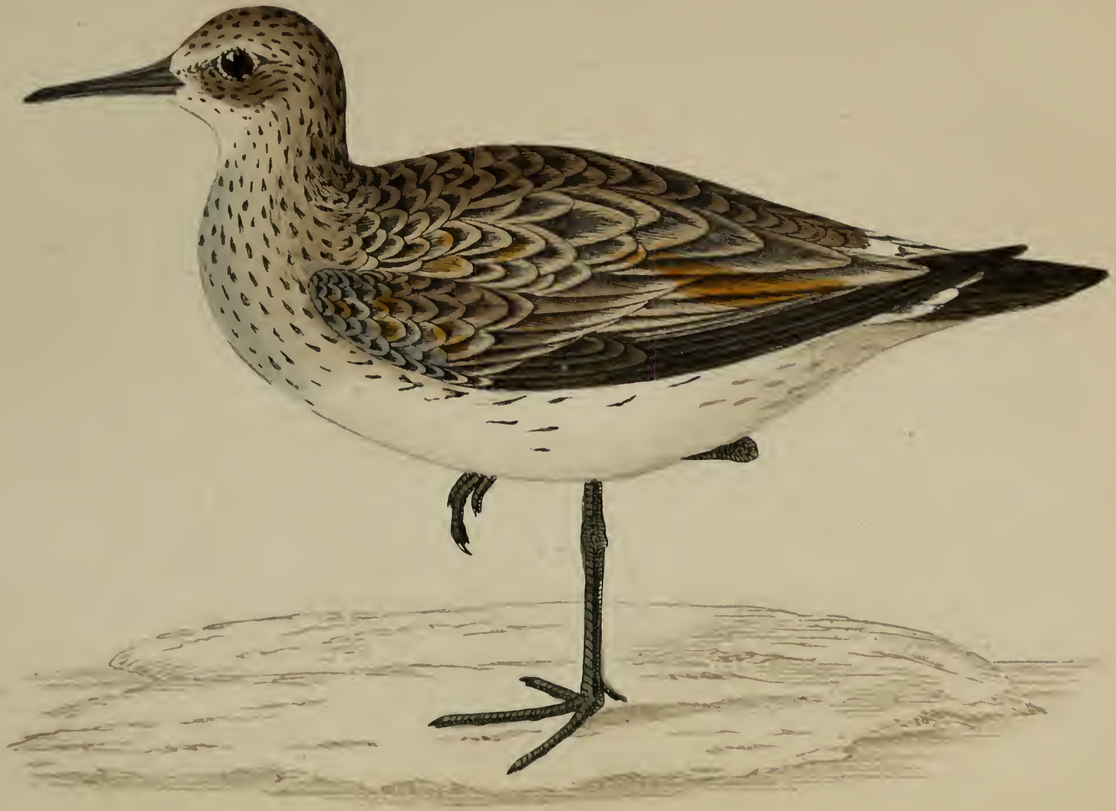
Audubon says, 'They fly at a considerable height with rapidity, deviating alternately to either side, and plunge toward the ground.'

They feed on small beetles, and other insects and their larvæ, and worms picked up at the water's edge.

The note is a mere 'weet,' or 'tree, tree,' expressed in a shrill and unmelodious manner.

The nest is placed by lakes or marshes, on some grassy knoll.

The eggs are four in number, yellowish grey, or pale olive green, spotted with olive or chesnut brown markings.



SCHINZ'S SANDPIPER.

Male; length, six inches and a half to seven and a little over, according to different measurements; bill, nearly black; iris, brown; over it is a white streak, less pure in winter; forehead in summer, white; head on the sides, greyish white speckled on the centres of the feathers with dusky black; on the crown in summer, with the feathers marked on their centres with black, and on the edges with rufous, and in winter as are the neck on the back and nape, grey brown streaked with dusky; neck on the sides, greyish white, speckled with dusky black, the dark marks being along the shafts. Chin, white; throat in summer, white, in winter as is the breast on the upper part, greyish white speckled with dusky, in summer with deep black across it, the edges of the feathers tinged with grey, on the lower part white. The back with black on the centres of the feathers and with rufous edges, in winter grey brown in place of rufous.

The wings have the first quill the longest; the axillary plume white. Greater and lesser wing coverts, black on the centres of the feathers, with rufous edges in summer, in winter grey brown edged with greyish white; primaries, brownish grey or dusky black, the latter towards the tips, the inner ones more or less edged and tipped with white, the shafts white; secondaries, dusky brown minutely tipped with white, and edged with the same; tertiaries, long, dusky brown, margined in summer with rufous, and in winter with ash grey; the quill feathers underneath are ash-colour with white shafts. The tail has the two middle feathers longer than the others and pointed, and deep or blackish brown in colour, the others ash brown; upper and under tail coverts, white. The legs, which are without feathers for a considerable space above the knee, are, as the toes, black, tinged with green; claws, black.

In the young at first the plumage is a mixture of grey, black, and rufous, subsequently the bill is nearly black, the base pale yellowish red; the upper parts are rufous with black centres to the feathers, and white tips; the breast, pale brown or dingy white with large dusky spots.

While passing from the winter to the summer plumage, and back again from the latter to the former, what may be called a 'neutral tint' prevails, while now the one and then the other in turn is assuming the prevalence.

PECTORAL SANDPIPER.

Tringa pectoralis, JENYNS. EYTON. GOULD.

Tringa—...........? *Pectoralis. Pectus*—The breast?

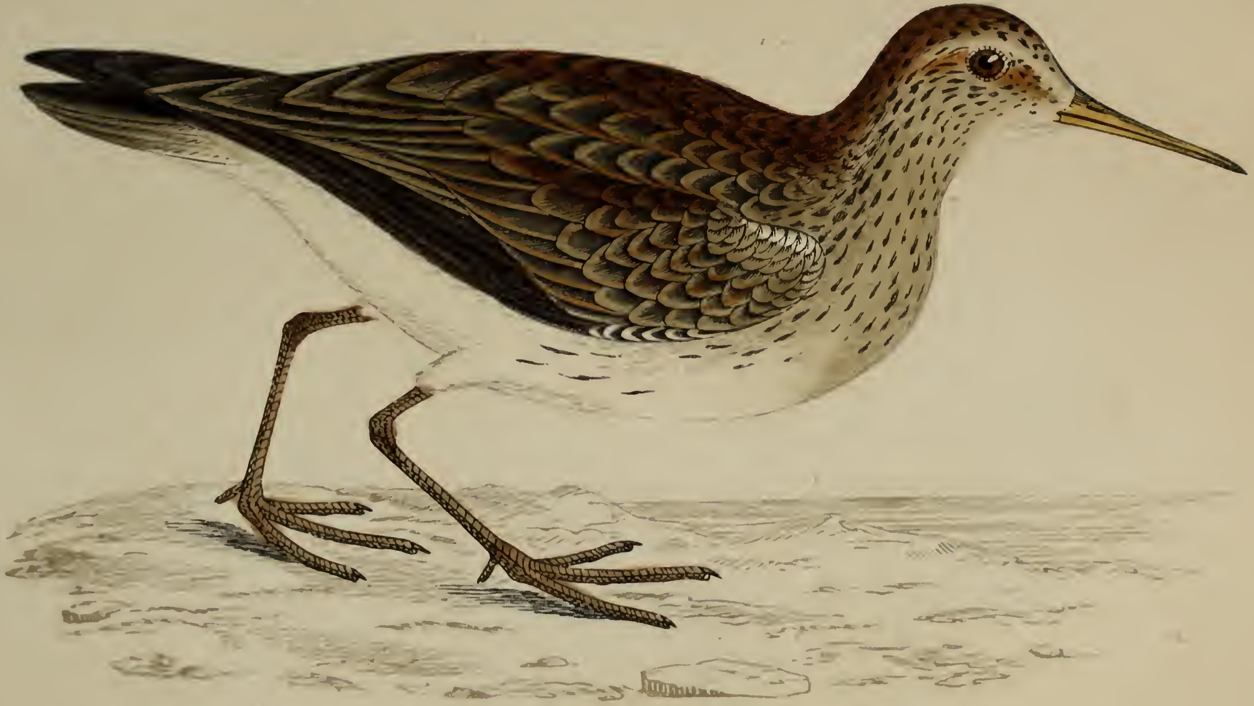
THIS is an American species, and not uncommon in different parts of the United States—Maine, Massachusetts, and the neighbourhood of Boston; and southwards in Tobago, and others of the West Indian Islands, and so on to Brazil.

In Yorkshire one, of which Thomas George Bonney, Esq., of St. John's College, Cambridge, has written me word, was shot near Filey, in the East Riding, a small and quiet seaside place, which, on account of these qualities, I would recommend to ornithological students, in preference to Burlington, or Scarborough, though the 'Queen of English watering places;' one also at the Tees' mouth, near Redcar, on the 30th. of August, 1853, and another in a grass field at Coatham, near there, on the 17th. of October in the same year; both are put on record in 'The Naturalist,' volume iii, page 275-6, by T. S. Rudd, Esq. In Norfolk one, a female, was shot on Breydon Broad, near Yarmouth, on the 30th. of September, 1853. In Cornwall it has been met with about Gwyllyn Vase, near Falmouth; also one on the shore of Annet, one of the Isles of Scilly, on the 27th. of May, 1840, by D. W. Mitchell, Esq., of Penzance.

They go north to build in the spring, and return in the autumn.

They are fond of moist and marshy places and the banks of rivers, 'low down in a grassy vale,' and near the sea. They mingle with other species, and collect in flocks.

The flight of this Sandpiper is 'firm, rapid, and well sustained. It skims rather low over the surface of the water or the land, and at times shoots high up into the air,



PECTORAL SANDPIPER.

propelling itself with double rapidity and in perfect silence. It runs with great agility, and probes the sand or wet earth, immersing its bill up to the base.'

They feed on small crustacea, beetles, and other insects and larvæ, with which they swallow a few seeds; and they also subsist on some species of sea-weed, and absorb small fragments of stone. For the former-named, they bore with the bill in the sand.

The note is a low plaintive whistle.

Male; length, eight inches to eight inches and three quarters, or a little over that; bill, dark dusky brown towards the tip, orange brown about the base; from it a dusky line extends to the eye, and over it a white streak. Iris, dark brown; head on the sides, greyish white tinged with brown, and streaked with dusky black along the shaft of each feather; on the crown, dusky brown, the feathers with dark central streaks and rufous tips; neck on the sides, greyish white with a tinge of brown, and each feather streaked along the shaft with dusky black; on the back and the nape, dark brown with lighter-coloured margins to the feathers; chin, white; throat and breast above, greyish white, the latter tinged with pale brown and yellowish, with a dusky black streak along the shaft line of each feather; below white. Back, dark blackish brown, with lighter-coloured margins to the feathers, in summer ferruginous or ochreous, in winter pale.

The wings expand to the width of one foot three inches and a half; the first quill feather is the longest. Greater and lesser wing coverts, dark brown, with lighter-coloured edges to the feathers; primaries, dusky black, the shaft of the first white; secondaries, dusky black, each with a narrow edge of white; tertiaries, dark brown, with lighter-coloured margins, in summer ferruginous. The tail, much graduated, has the two middle feathers, which are the longest, black with pale brownish white margins, and in summer broadly edged with ferruginous, the others grey brown or brownish black, tipped and edged with yellowish white or yellowish brown, according to the season; upper tail coverts, black, glossed with purple, the feathers edged and tipped with ochreous, which becomes pale in winter; under tail coverts, white. Legs and toes, yellowish olive green brown; claws, dusky black.

DUNLIN.

PURRE. DUNLIN SANDPIPER. SEA SNIPE. PLOVER'S PAGE.
STINT. LEAST SNIPE. SEA LARK.

Tringa variabilis,	SELBY. JENYNS.
" *alpina,*	PENNANT. MONTAGU.
" *cinclus,*	PENNANT. MONTAGU.

Tringa—............? *Variabilis*—Variable.

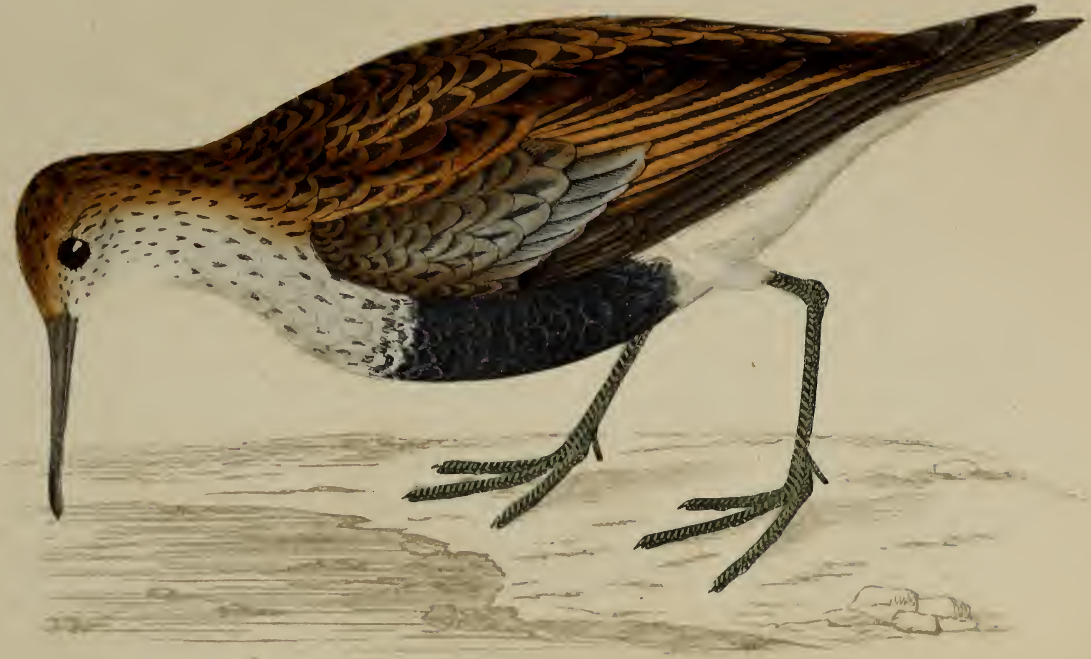
THE Dunlin, or Purre, the former the name that used to be given to the bird in its summer, and the latter in its winter plumage, as if two species, has had its specific name assigned to it as indicative of the great difference between its appearance in the one and in the other season; but I do not see but that the other Sandpipers have an equal claim to the title on the like account.

It is very abundant in the Arctic regions of America, and the islands of the Polar sea, and thence through the United States to Florida, Carolina, Cayenne, Mexico, and Domingo, and others of the West Indian Islands; as also in Europe from the Ferroe Isles, Iceland, Greenland, Lapland, and Norway, and so on, to the southern countries of the continent. It likewise belongs to Asia, being common in Asia Minor and the region about the Caucasus, as also in the islands of the Indian Ocean—Japan, Sunda, and Timor. So, too, from the north coast of Africa, even, it is said, to the Cape.

The Purre is one of the commonest of our Sandpipers, being found throughout England, Scotland, and Wales.

In Ireland it is also plentiful, as likewise in the Shetland Islands, and the Orkneys.

I saw one of these birds shot by a lad, at the Nafferton



DUNLIN.

beck, ten miles from the sea, about a hundred yards from my own gate, in the severe winter of 1853-4, on the 4th. of January. In December, 1844, a pair were shot on the bank of the Trent, near Melbourne, Derbyshire. In Surrey it is said to have occurred near Godalming.

This species advances to the north in the spring, and retreats southwards in the autumn, travelling, it is related, 'early in the morning or late at night, when they fly close to the ground along the sea-shore, or high in the air across the water, flying in a straight line at a quick pace. It is worthy of observation that the old and young birds are hardly ever known to migrate in mixed groups, but always keep each to themselves.'

About the middle of April, or nearer to its end, or in the beginning of May, they betake themselves to the moors to nest, attaching themselves to the same grounds as the Plovers and the Snipes, and towards the end of August again return to the sea-side, though found at times also by the margins of lakes and rivers. They approach dwelling-houses without fear, if such happen to adjoin the places that are congenial to their habits. They frequent the coasts, and especially those parts which are sandy and humid, or where mud prevails.

'In Scotland and in its islands,' says Selby, 'this bird may be considered as indigenous, and great numbers are known to breed not only upon the sea-coast, but in the marshes of the interior. A few also remain in Northumberland, which may be called the southern limit of the permanent residence of the species. It is not to be supposed, however, that the multitudes that people our northern shores are the offspring of such only as breed in this latitude; they are principally composed of migrants from countries farther northward, to which the great body retires during summer.' I may, however, here observe that many pass the summer, at all events, so far south as Yorkshire; their nests have been found on Stockton Common, near York, and they have been known to build on Thorne Moor, near Doncaster, and on the high moors near Halifax; one was shot at Brodsworth, near Doncaster, in the spring of 1844. In Cambridgeshire, the Rev. Leonard Jenyns records that they were seen now and then in summer time, in the fens, and that in the beginning of July, 1824, they were particularly abundant in that district.

They assemble in large flocks, thousands being sometimes to be seen at once, before they disperse for the winter into small companies; and very pleasant it is to watch them as they sweep out over the sea, and then round in again not far above the surface, displaying in their winter plumage, a light and dark appearance alternately: in thus coursing along they all move in a simultaneous manner, as if under the guidance of some leader.

The Dunlin is very careful of her nest and its contents, and in more than one instance has been known to suffer herself to be taken in the hand sooner than forsake it. More commonly, if it be approached, the male, and not unfrequently the female also, will fly towards any intruder, and alighting near him, use every endeavour, as by pretending lameness and disability, to cheat him of a knowledge of its situation, but an opposite result to that intended is sometimes hazarded. The Dunlin is not a shy bird, and is easily reconciled to confinement. It is good to eat in the autumn, on its first return to the sea.

They run along the sands in a sprightly manner, and very fast on occasion. in a horizontal position of body, the head being carried in the same way, and retracted with the neck, continually flirting up the tail. They skim over the surface of the sea with great rapidity in a semicircular course.

They feed on small beetles, gnats, sand-flies, and other aquatic insects and their larvæ, worms, crustacea, and mollusks, for which they probe with their bill; and in quest of these run nimbly along the sands by the edge of the sea, coursing, now here, now there, and then flying off to some short distance for a fresh search. They frequently wade in a little way, or rather, are often overtaken by the light foam of the spent wave, which their instinct tells them will in a moment be withdrawn, in obedience to the Divine command imposed on every element, and which, as it must obey, need therefore not be feared. During the full tide they rest on some rock or other eminence, or remain gathered together on the beach, awaiting the time when they shall be able to return again to their feeding-places.

The ordinary note, which is frequently given utterance to, is only a weak scream, a 'kwee, kwee;' but the male bird sings his best to the female to amuse her while sitting on the nest, or sounds a timely alarm if any danger be thought to approach. While at rest on the ground, the cry is softer than when on the wing. They frequently give a scream on first taking flight.

The nest is usually located under the shelter of some tuft or small bush in any dry spot, on marshy moors and heaths, mosses or salt marshes, as well as by the sea. It is often concealed, intentionally or unintentionally, with great success, so as to be very difficult to find. Sometimes, however, it is fashioned upon the open grass which grows green and verdant here and there among the dark heather, 'lonely, lonesome, cool, and green.' A few bits of moss, withered heath, or grass, form its careless lining, if there be any in it, the same materials being for the most part merely rounded into form—a natural cradle.

The eggs are four in number, of a greenish white, greenish grey, or dull green colour, blotted and spotted with a darker and a lighter shade of brown, most so towards and at the larger end. Some have the ground a light blue inclining to dull white, others a clear light green, richly spotted with light brown. They are deposited in the nest with the smaller ends inwards.

The young leave the nest as soon as hatched, and hide themselves in the most recondite manner.

Male; weight, very variable, from nine drachms to eleven, and from that to an ounce and a half; length, about eight inches, but the size appears variable as well as the plumage, sometimes being half an inch less, or even, according to Sir William Jardine, an inch and a half or two inches. The bill, slightly inclined at the tip, is black, in winter not so dark; and between it and the eye is an indistinct brown streak. Iris, brown, or dusky; over it is a streak of white. Head on the sides, streaked with light brown and grey; on the crown, a mixture of black and ferruginous, or reddish orange, in winter grey, the centre of each feather a little darker and the edge a little lighter; the feathers of the neck and nape, on their centres, streaked with black, the edges clear reddish brown, in winter greyish, and the edges still more so. Chin, white; throat, greyish white streaked with black, in winter paler; breast in summer, greyish white, spotted most on the upper part and sides with black and dusky, and in the centre brownish black, each feather narrowly tipped with white, forming a broken fringe, which extends across to the sides; Montagu mentions a specimen in which the whole of the breast was nearly black—others have more or less closely approached this appearance; below black, in winter white. The back above has the feathers black in the centre, with orange rufous edges, and on the lower part brownish black, in winter nearly uniform ash grey, the centre of each feather a little darker, and the edges a little paler.

The wings have the first quill feather the longest; they expand to the width of about one foot three inches; greater and lesser wing coverts, brown margined with pale ash grey, the longer ones having white tips, forming an oblique bar across the wing; primaries, greyish black with white shafts, in winter ash grey with darker centres and paler margins; secondaries, greyish black edged with white, the shafts white; tertiaries, black with rufous edges, which, in winter, turn to greyish white. The tail, which is much cuneated, has some approach to being doubly forked, the two middle feathers being the longest and pointed; they are dark brown with paler edges, the others nearly uniform ash grey with grey shafts; upper tail coverts, a mixture of black and grey, or deep brown with tinges of ferruginous, more or less according to the season of the year; under tail coverts, white. Legs, toes, and claws, black; the former in winter not so dark.

The female much resembles the male, but is larger in size. The breast is not so dark.

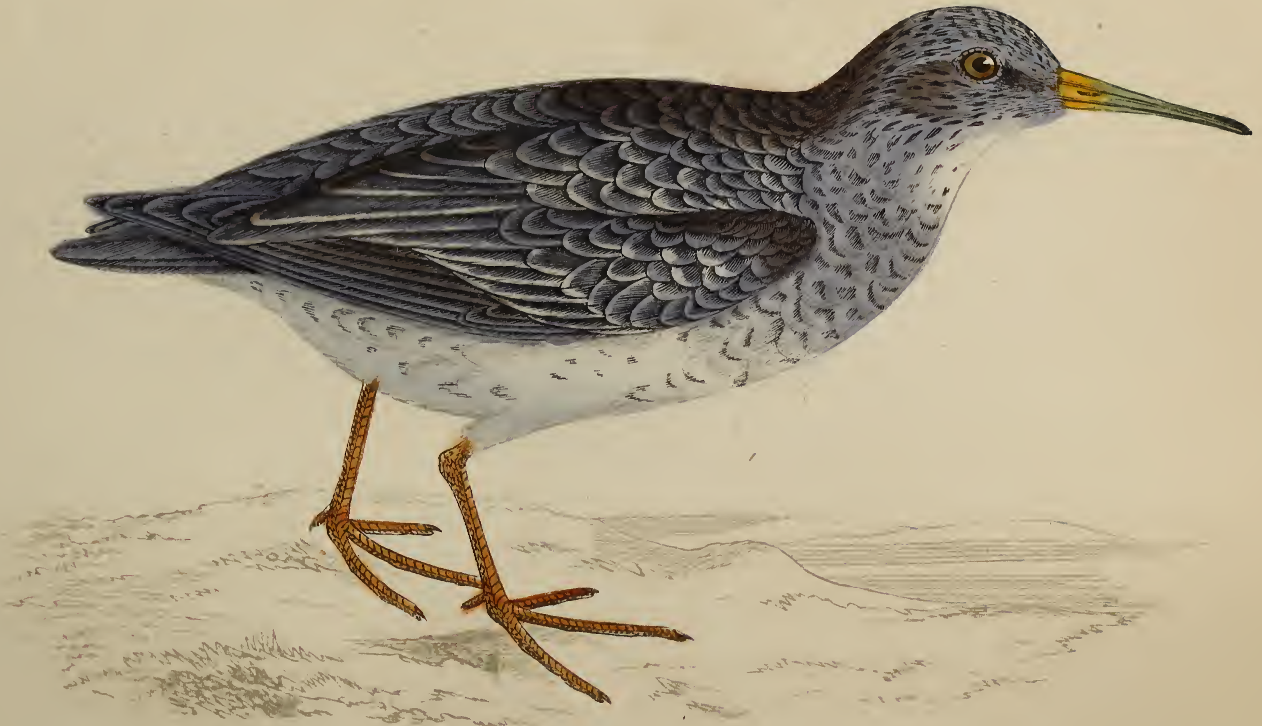
The young at first are covered with greyish brown down, with a black list over the head and along the nape and back; the breast greyish white, the legs pale green.

In their first year's plumage they have the bill brownish black; the head on the sides and neck, a mixture of pale grey and brown; the throat spotted with dusky brown; the breast white, also spotted with dusky brown; back, wing coverts, and tertiaries, a mixture of black, dark brown, pale brown, and buff; under tail coverts, white. Legs, brownish black.

These birds naturally vary very much in the intermediate stages of their plumage, between that of summer and that of winter.

I procured, in May, 1842, a very elegant specimen of this bird, shot near Burlington Quay, displaying to great advantage the two plumages of summer and winter.

The engraving is after a design by my friend the Rev. Richard Pye Alington, Rector of Swinhope, Lincolnshire.



PURPLE SANDPIPER.

PURPLE SANDPIPER.

SELNINGER SANDPIPER. BLACK SANDPIPER. SEA SANDPIPER.

Tringa maritima,	PENNANT.
" *Lincolniensis,*	PENNANT.
" *nigricans,*	MONTAGU.
" *striata,*	FLEMING.

Tringa—............? *Maritima*—Maritime—belonging to the sea.

THIS very distinct species is sufficiently common throughout Europe, from the shores of the Mediterranean, Italy, Switzerland, and France, to Holland, Norway, Iceland, Greenland, Spitzbergen, and the Faroe Islands. It occurs in the like latitudes in North America.

Many are found on the coasts of England, Scotland, and Wales, and some visit Ireland. In Orkney they are very numerous, as also in Shetland.

They breed in Iceland, and other northern lands. A few remain for the purpose in this country. The nest has been found in Scotland, and young birds, scarcely able to fly, were met with by Mr. Selby, on one of the Fern Islands, off the coast of Northumberland.

In England, the species occurs, or has occurred, in Durham, Yorkshire, Norfolk, Suffolk near Ipswich, Essex, Kent, Sussex, Devonshire, and Dorsetshire. Also in Cornwall, but not commonly, near Gwyllyn Vase, one shot by Mr. Pascoe, November 22nd., 1846; one at Swanpool, shot by T. Passingham, Esq., 1848; one by Mr. G. Copeland, at Pendennis Castle.

I once shot one myself, several years ago, among the rocks at low-water, off the end of the 'Cobb,' the local name of the pier, Lyme Regis. It was, 'ni fallor,' in the autumn. It is very common in winter on the Dunbar shore, Scotland, as I am informed by Robert Gray, Esq. Mr. Thomas Edward, of Banff, has obligingly forwarded to me another shot by him near that town in May, 1852. This one was in summer plumage, as was also, I believe, the other previously alluded to.

In Ireland it occurs, but is said to be very local. Likewise in Orkney.

About the middle of April, or from that period to the beginning of May, they migrate to the north, and after rearing their young return again about September.

Unlike the other Sandpipers, whose natural history we have hitherto been considering, this one attaches itself to rocky and stony shores, such affording the kind or kinds of food more peculiarly sought by it.

These birds assemble in flocks of about thirty or more, being sociable among themselves, but their difference of habits naturally prevents any but an unfrequent commingling with other species. They are not at all shy in their ways, and may be approached very nearly.

The Purple Sandpiper has frequently been seen to alight on the water, and to swim with apparent ease. It runs with readiness and dexterity over and between the rocks and stones, nimbly avoiding each encroaching wave, and following it again as it falls back and leaves behind it an uncovered place whereon to seek and to find food. 'When in flocks, these birds fly in a compact body, but seldom to any great distance; and when disturbed, after taking a small circuit seaward, often return to the same exposed rock by the water's edge, from which they started.' They sometimes are met with in company with Turnstones, owing to the similarity of the places frequented by the two species.

'The flight of this bird,' says Meyer, 'is very quick and undulating, frequently performed close to the water, even when the waves of the sea run high; at other times it flies in a straight line at a great elevation, particularly when in company of many of its species.'

Minute shell-fish, mollusks, shrimps, sandhoppers, small crabs, and other crustacea, compose their food, and these they seek and find by turning over the marine plants that grow on the rocks.

The note is often repeated, and sounds like the word 'weet.'

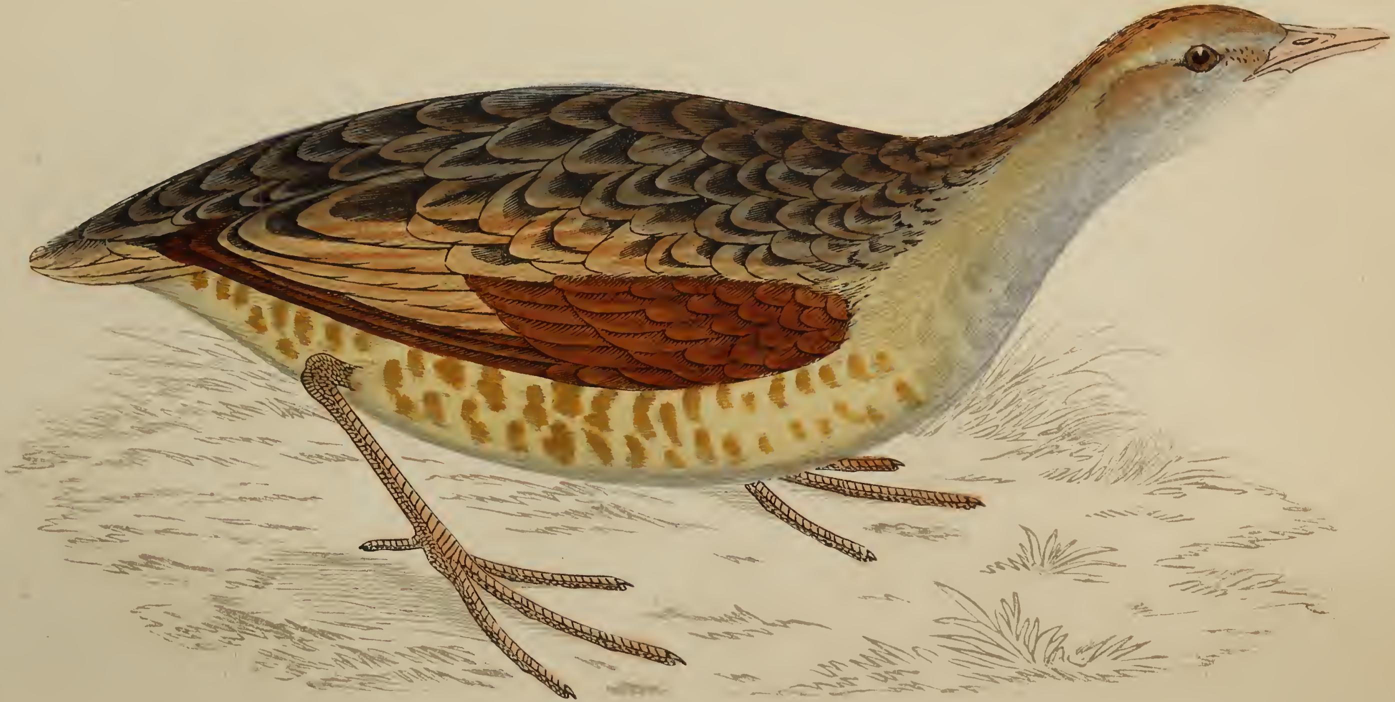
The nest is fitted in some hollow in the ground with a little moss or other herbage for a lining. It is built on mountains among small pools of water, in the middle of a clump of grass.

The eggs are four in number. They are of a pyriform shape, of a yellowish grey colour, with small irregular spots of pale brown, crowded at the obtuse end and rare at the other. They appear to be laid at the end of June, or beginning of July.

The plumage of this species is close, soft, and rather downy; it is said to become thicker in winter. Male; length, eight inches and a quarter, or a little over; bill, bright orange yellow, slender, slightly curved and tapering towards the point; in winter the orange fades, and the tip becomes dusky, and the orange dull red; iris, dusky; over the eyes is a white streak —the eyelids greyish white; forehead, white. Head on the crown, reddish brown on the margins of the feathers, their centres black, reflecting different metallic colours according to the light in which they are viewed; in winter uniform leaden grey; chin, white; throat, dull greyish white, and spotted with dusky streaks; breast above, dark greyish ash-colour, inclining to pale brown, with dusky spots spreading out from the shafts, the side, edges, and tips white in many of the feathers; below, the breast is more white, the spots being smaller and lengthened out towards the tail; in winter white, with an occasional streak of grey. The back has the feathers black in the centre, and reddish brown round their edges, exhibiting also varied metallic lustres in different lights; in winter, blackish leaden grey with a purple reflection.

Greater wing coverts, dusky greyish black deeply tipped with white, in winter with greyish white, forming a bar across the wing; lesser wing coverts, dusky black, less tipped with white, or not at all; primaries, dusky black, the shafts white, the outer narrow web of each feather darker than the broad inner one; secondaries, tipped with white, some of them almost wholly white, forming a bar across the wing when opened; tertiaries, bluish black edged with reddish brown, and with a variety of metallic tints according to the light, their tips white; in winter a leaden grey hue prevails, and the edges also are greyish white as well as the tips. The tail, wedge-shaped, has the four middle feathers long and pointed, brownish or greyish black with rufous yellow edges, the others grey brown with dusky cinereous edges, in all twelve in number; upper tail coverts, almost black, in winter leaden grey, glossed, like the back, with purple; under tail coverts, white, spotted and streaked with deep ash-colour and light brown. The legs feathered nearly to the knee, and the toes, bright orange yellow, in winter yellow—the hind toe is directed inwards; claws, much arched, short, and blunt, black in colour.

In the young, the bill at the base is dull yellow; the head is dull greyish black, the feathers margined with dull yellowish brown; neck on the sides, ash grey with darker streaks; breast, also ash grey with darker streaks, and on the sides with large longitudinal streaks of a darker shade. Under tail coverts, streaked longitudinally with deep ash grey.



LANDRAIL.

LAND-RAIL.

CORN-CRAKE. DAKER HEN. MEADOW-CRAKE.

Crex pratensis,	SELBY. JENYNS.
Rallus crex,	MONTAGU
Gallinula crex,	BEWICK.
Ortygometra crex,	FLEMING.
Porphyrio rufescens,	BRISSON.

Crex—...........? *Pratensis*—Pertaining to meadows.

ONE would think that this bird, so difficult to make get on the wing, and which seems of such feeble powers when it has been at last, evidently against its will, forced to do so, could never sustain, or, at all events, would never voluntarily undertake so lengthened and laborious a flight as that which must be necessary to cross from the continent to this, its temporary island home. But such a thought is contradicted by the fact, and glad are many, no doubt, with myself, that so it is. Every one must recall with pleasure the 'Old Times,' when first he heard, and first remarked, as on first hearing he could not fail to do, the curious creaking cry of the Corn-Crake.

This species is a native of all the four quarters of the globe, occurring throughout Europe, even in the highest parts of Sweden and Norway, and in Iceland and the Ferroe Isles; as also in Asia—in Asia Minor. In Africa likewise, and America—in the West Indies; so too in Madeira.

It is more or less common throughout England, especially in the north, Wales, and Ireland; in the last-named particularly so, and in Orkney and Zetland, but in some places in Scotland appears, as also in some parts of Yorkshire, to be less numerous than formerly, though without any apparent cause. In Cornwall it is said to be rather rare, and in Cambridgeshire; in Norfolk only a few stay to breed, the greater numbers that are seen are only passing visitors.

Its favourite haunts are low meadows of mowing grass, clover fields, willow beds, fields of growing corn, and any such like fastnesses as can afford it a secure hiding-place.

They conduct their migration by night, and arrive in England about the last week in April, reaching the northern parts of the kingdom about the beginning of the first week in May, but some have been seen by the end of April. Their arrival in the south seems to be rather later, namely, in the second week in May. Their departure takes place early in October, but one is recorded to have been killed near London, in December, 1834; one near Yarmouth, in Norfolk, in January, 1836; and one in Ireland on the 29th. of March, but whether it was a newly-arrived bird, or one that had stayed through the previous winter, cannot be affirmed. Instances have occurred of some individuals remaining throughout the winter, but only exceptions to the general rule. Mr. Edward Blyth mentions in the 'Magazine of Natural History,' volume viii, page 512, one thus met with at Tooting, Surrey, about the middle of December, 1834, and it was at the time in good condition. One was killed in Scotland, in Kircudbrightshire, not far from Dumfries, on the 19th. of February, 1853; it, too, was in fine plumage, and equally good bodily order. One in Oxfordshire, near Henley-on-Thames, on the 4th. of November, 1851. One in Lancashire, at Lytham, near Preston, by C. Nelson, Esq., M.D., on the 10th. of the same month in the following year. One seen in the Cambridge market on the 7th. of November, 1851, but it had the mark of a wound on the wing, which had no doubt prevented it from migrating. On the 2nd. of December, 1851, another was shot near Plymouth, Devonshire, which had not left our shores, though, to all appearance, 'sound, wind and limb.' In the same year, on the 18th. of February, one had been taken near Bembridge, in the Isle of Wight. In Sussex, one near Rottingdean, on the 27th. of November, 1844. Another was shot near Rye, in the same county, just before Christmas, 1848, and another was seen near the same place the following February. In the winter of 1846-7, during a severe frost, with snow on the ground, a Land-Rail was constantly seen feeding with the fowls in a farm-yard in the parish of Fringford, Oxfordshire.

One, January 28th., 1846, in the parish of Shifnal, Salop.

They assemble together in certain places before going away. On their first arrival, they are in poor condition, but soon become in better case. Forty were once seen by a farmer, in the parish of Modbury, Devonshire, in the month of October, collected together previous to leaving; he shot seventeen, but the next day the others had all disappeared. Individuals have been occasionally taken on ships at sea.

The Land-Rail has a great aversion to being put up, and, being of a shy and timorous nature, skulks and runs about most pertinaciously in its covert, doubling backwards and forwards both rapidly and cleverly, rather than do so. If alarmed unawares into flight, it will suddenly drop after flying a few yards, and take to its legs for security; it is in consequence very rarely seen, in proportion to the comparative abundance in which it unquestionably exists. I remember last year dislodging one close to me, which, though apparently it must have lurked almost under my feet, I could not discover: it is still more difficult to make it rise a second time. If closely followed it will at times take refuge in trees, running without difficulty among the branches, and hiding among the leaves.

The following well-told relation of the circumstance it records I give as communicated to me by William Robert Shepherd, Esq., of the Dana, Shrewsbury:—'Rather a singular circumstance occurred to me the other day. Whilst out with my gun on the 13th. instant, at Ludlow, in this county, in going over a grass field, my dog in advance flushed a Corn-Crake, which fled steadily for a short distance, and then dropped among the grass. Being desirous of watching its movements, I hurried towards the spot where it had alighted, when I saw it stealing through the grass with the stealthiness and rapidity of a mouse, ever and anon raising its head to see the extent of the danger. I was thus watching it, when suddenly it stopped and crouched close to the ground. Motioning the dog to stay behind, I crept cautiously to the spot, and as I drew near to it, was surprised to see no attempt at escape.

Having reached the place, I carefully examined the ground for some distance round, but could find nothing. I was just on the point of giving up the search, thinking that the bird had stolen off without my notice, when my attention was attracted by what appeared to me to be a clod of earth lying on the ground among the grass. I walked to it, and on stooping down, was no less surprised than pleased to find the object of my search, apparently lifeless. I took it up—the head and legs dropped; to all appearances the bird was quite dead. Being well acquainted with the habits of birds, I immediately detected the imposition; so placing the bird upon the ground, I retired to a short distance, under cover of the trunk of a large tree. I had not remained long before I saw the cunning bird gently move; then suddenly starting to its legs, it ran a short distance; then taking wing, soon disappeared over an adjoining hedge. This is a striking instance of that deep cunning and sagacity which characterizes the habits of some birds; as such I have thought it worth recording.'

Mr. Jesse has given a similar account in his 'Gleanings in Natural History,' as follows:—'A gentleman had a Corn-Crake brought to him by his dog, to all appearance quite dead. As it lay on the ground, he turned it over with his foot, and was convinced that it was dead. Standing by, however, in silence, he suddenly saw it open an eye; he then took it up—its head fell, its legs hung, and it appeared again quite dead. He then put it in his pocket, and before long he felt it all alive, and struggling to escape. He then took it out; it was as lifeless as before. Having laid it again upon the ground, and retired to some distance, the bird in about five minutes warily raised its head, looked round, and decamped at full speed.'

The late Bishop Stanley, in his 'Familiar History of Birds,' gives the two following curious accounts of torpidity in this species, the latter quoted from the 'Edinburgh Journal,' vol. viii:—'We have two instances of dormant Corn-Crakes, which are also migratory summer birds. A farmer at Aikerness, in Orkney, about mid-winter, in demolishing a mud wall, there called a hill-dyke, found a Corn-Crake in the midst of it, a bird which is plentiful in summer, but departs, like Swallows, at the close of that season. It was apparently lifeless; but being fresh to the feel and smell, it began to move, and in a few hours was able to walk about, and lived for two days in the kitchen; but, refusing all food, it died. The other occurred at Monaghan, in Ireland, where a gentleman, having directed his labourers, in winter, to remove a large heap of manure, that had remained undisturbed for a great length of time, perceived a hole, which was supposed to have been made by rats; it penetrated to a great depth, but at its termination, instead of rats, three Corn-Crakes were discovered, as if placed there with the greatest care, not a feather being out of its place, and apparently lifeless. The birds, on examination, were however considered to be in a torpid state, and were placed near a fire in a warm room. In the course of a short time, a tremulous motion was observed in one of their legs, and soon after, a similar motion was noticed in the legs and wings of the whole, which at length extended itself to their whole bodies, and finally the birds were enabled to run and fly about the room.'

These statements are fully corroborated by Dr. W. B. Baikie and Mr. Heddle, who, in their 'Natural History of Orkney,' mention that several have been seen there in winter; that one was observed at Lopness, in December, 1812, another in Ronsay, in February, 1847; and that upon several occasions, when digging up old turf dykes, Land-Rails have been found in them in a torpid condition. The hen bird has been known to feign lameness, with the view of drawing away an approaching intruder from her nest.

This is an exceedingly good bird for the table, and, as such, has come under the protection of the Game Laws. Thirteen couple have been known to have been killed in one day in Devonshire, fifteen couple in one day in Sussex, and seven couple at the same place the following day. Mr. Selby mentions his having shot eight or ten in the course of an hour in a single field. Old Drayton, in the 'Polyalbion,' quaintly says of the Rayle, that it 'seldom comes but upon rich men's spits,' and two are said to be a present for a queen; but any very great value must not be put upon such legendary assertions, for we have most of us heard, and doubtless at the time we did hear it, believed, that 'four and twenty Blackbirds' made a 'dainty dish to set before the king.' Certain, however, it is that the bird before us is of very superior quality. It is capable of being kept in confinement.

It flies in a slow manner, with the legs dangling down, and in general just for a short distance, seeking only the nearest sheltering covert. At times it perches upon walls, shewing an awkward capability of climbing analogous to that exhibited by the Water-Hen. It can run with almost incredible swiftness, and threads its way in an astonishing manner among the grass without any apparent disturbance of it.

The food of the Land-Rail is composed of worms, snails, slugs, insects, grass seeds, and portions of vegetables. Sir William Jardine found a mouse in one.

The well-known note of the Corn-Crake, whence this its name, 'crake, crake; crake, crake,' is begun to be heard when summer is at last fully established, simultaneously in general with the arrival of the bird. The male it is that gives utterance to the dissonant cry, and by imitating it he may be enticed pretty near. It is uttered most frequently from the top of a clod of earth or a stone, but also otherwise at times. It is mostly heard in the evening or the morning, but occasionally also throughout the day, until the hen begins to sit. In like manner it is not unfrequently continued through part of the calm still summer night, 'till morning comes again,' at least from about eight o'clock in the evening till about twelve or one. A curious ventriloquism is resorted to at pleasure, making the sound at one moment appear close to the listener, and the next a long way off. When the brood are hatched, the stridulous sound is once more taken up, and sometimes the position of the nest is thus led to. A low guttural noise appears also to be expressed when the bird is alarmed or disturbed.

The nest is placed among long grass or corn, in a furrow or some slight hollow, and is lined with a few of the leaves and stalks of the neighbouring herbage.

The eggs, commonly seven or eight, or ten or even eleven in number, are of a pale reddish brown, or reddish or yellowish white colour, spotted and speckled with grey and reddish brown. They do not vary much, except in the size and greater or lesser number of the spots. Some are of a red tinted ground colour, with blots of deep red brown and purple; others white, with a faint tinge of blue, and fancifully streaked and spotted all over. Two broods are wont to be reared in the year, the first being hatched between the beginning or middle of June, or later towards the end.

The young quit the nest when hatched, and in rather less than six weeks are able to fly. The female sits very close, and often suffers in consequence, from the unwitting scythe of the mower. She leads the young about almost as soon as hatched.

Male; weight, about six or seven ounces, but it has been known as much as eight or eight and a half, and, on the first arrival of the bird, as little as five; length, about ten inches, not quite so much; bill, pale brown at the tip, and along the top of the upper mandible, the base pale reddish yellow, and the lower mandible beneath; iris, yellowish brown; over the eye is a greyish ash-coloured streak, blending with the colours on either side, and so going down the neck. The head on the sides, greyish ash-colour; on the crown, neck on the back, and nape, the feathers have dusky shaft streaks, the rest of the centres brown, and the edges yellow tinged with brown, or a tint of olive green; neck on the sides, tinged with greyish ash-colour; chin, yellowish white; throat, white tinted with grey; breast above, pale buff or yellowish brown, tinged with ash grey, with bars of brown and reddish white on the sides, which are reddish orange; below, the breast is nearly white with a tint of red. The feathers of the back are pale yellowish brown, each with a very dark brown central streak, and a slight tinge of olive green.

The axillary feathers are orange brown; greater and lesser wing coverts, rich golden chesnut brown; primaries, dull reddish brown; tertiaries, pale yellowish bay brown, streaked along the centres with very dark brown. The tail has the feathers dark brown along their centres, edged with pale yellowish brown; upper tail coverts, also dark along the centres of the feathers, the edges being pale yellowish bay brown; under tail coverts, pale buff or reddish brown, with bars of darker reddish brown and reddish white. The legs and toes, which are long, are pale dull yellowish, with a tint of reddish brown or grey.

The female is not quite so large. The head on the sides has less grey and not so clear. The greater and lesser wing coverts are not so bright in colour.

The young are at first covered with black down.

SPOTTED CRAKE.

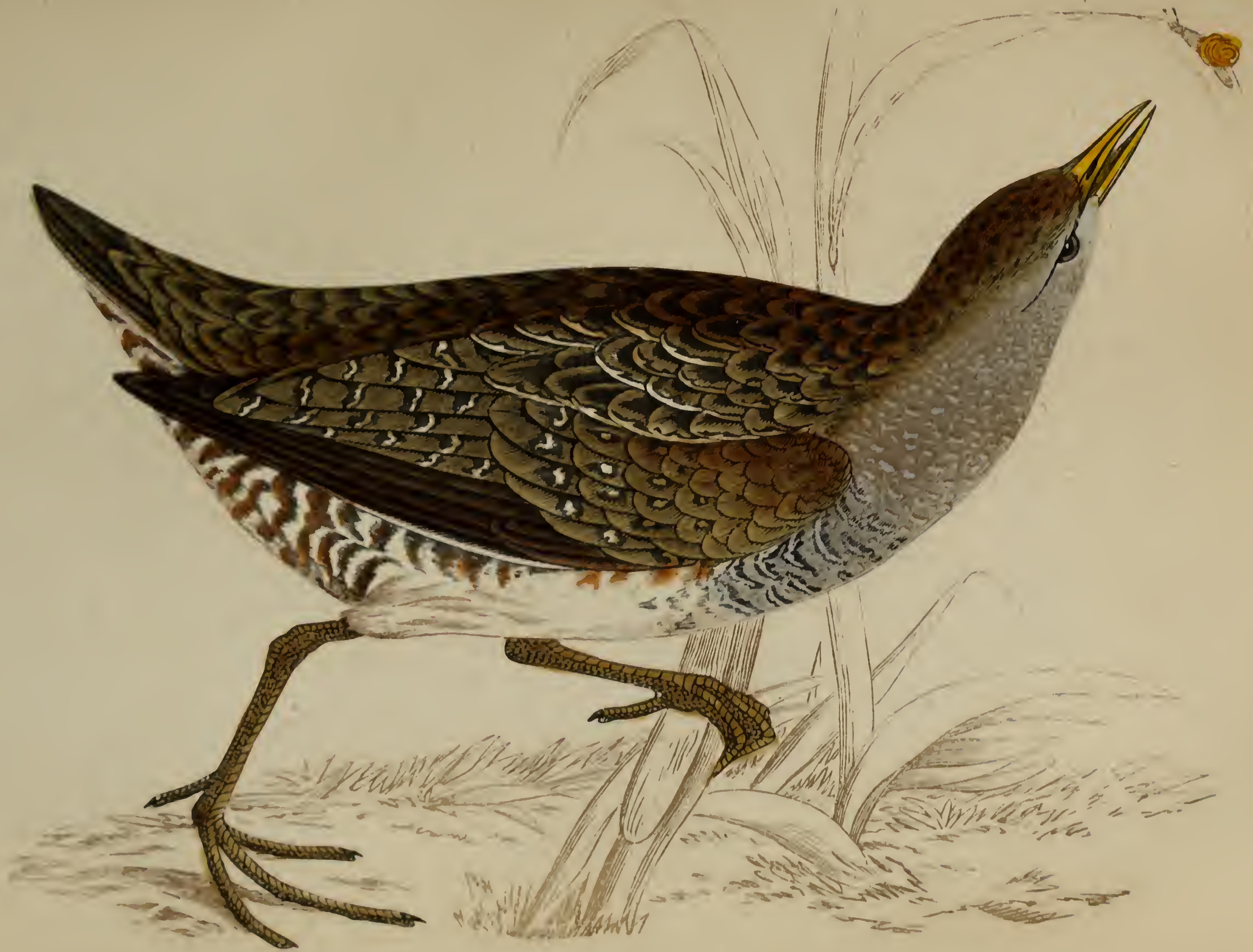
SPOTTED RAIL. SPOTTED WATER-HEN. SPOTTED GALLINULE.
WATER-CRAKE. WATER-RAIL.

Crex porzana,	SELBY. JENYNS.
Gallinula porzana,	BEWICK. FLEMING.
Rallus porzana.	MONTAGU.
Ortygometra porzana,	STEPHENS.

Crex—..........? *Porzana*—...........?

THIS bird extends, in its range, from Russia and the north of Sweden, through the midland districts of Germany and Holland, to the southern parts of Europe—Italy, France, Greece, and Turkey; likewise from thence to Africa; and also extends to Asia, being to be found in Siberia, Asia Minor, Persia, and India.

It is a very local species. In Yorkshire a few have been met with near Burlington, Hebden Bridge, and Halifax; about Doncaster it is more common, and at York, where, in the Foss Islands, it has been known occasionally to breed; near Leeds one, at Calverley. The Rev. R. P. Alington tells me that it is common in a small piece of fen called 'The small drains,' in the parish of North Coats, Lincolnshire; but he has never seen it after October. A. Fuller, Esq. also informs me of five shot at Tetney, near Great Grimsby, 1851. In Norfolk it is not uncommon at Belton, and other places, and breeds about several of the Broads. One was found dead at Thetford, in October, 1847, which had been killed by flying against the wires of the telegraph. In Surrey, the bird is stated to have been met with near Godalming. In Oxfordshire, one near Henley-on-Thames. In Durham and Cumberland it is not unfrequently seen, and its appearance



SPOTTED CRAKE.

has been noted in Devonshire, as also in Dorsetshire, Sussex, Hampshire, and Cambridgeshire, though rather rarely, in which county it has been ascertained to breed, as it probably does in many others: a nest and eggs were taken in the Fens, in 1853, as T. G. Bonney, Esq. has informed me. A few have occasionally been seen near Plymouth; one was obtained in Efford Marsh. In Cornwall, one was seen in the market at Falmouth, in November, 1848; and in October, 1849, one was shot at Swanpool. In Northumberland, Mr. Selby has put up as many as six at a time, but most of them young birds.

In the year 1853 they appear to have been unusually abundant. The Hon. T. L. Powys writes in the 'Zoologist,' page 4165, that there were six or seven on sale in the Oxford market, and that he saw eight or nine others at Whittlesea, in Cambridgeshire, and heard from a friend that they were abundant in the marshes in Kent; in Suffolk and Cornwall, also in Wales, in Carmarthenshire, and in other parts of the Principality, as recorded by Mr. Dillwyn.

In Scotland it has been noticed in Forfarshire, Dumfriesshire, Edinburghshire, and various other parts.

This bird is stated by the Rev. C. Clouston, to have occurred in Orkney, but neither the date nor the locality are mentioned. It has been observed, though rarely, in Sanday.

In Ireland it occasionally occurs as a straggler in summer; one was procured at Clay Castle, near Youghall, in the county of Cork, in the month of October, 1843.

It frequents low, flat, and marshy lands, and the sides of pools and rivulets, especially those parts of such as are covered with flags, reeds, and sedges. It is also at times found in woods and forests where swamps occur.

Its migration begins the middle of March, and takes place by night. Montagu has mentioned his having seen one on the 14th. of that month; and Mr. Blyth another, seen by him in the London market in January, 1834, which was said to have been sent up from Kent. It retires after the middle of October.

In its habits it exhibits the same stealthiness that is characteristic of the other species, and delights in hiding itself in the midst of the thickest low cover. It is very easily kept in confinement. It is fine eating, and said to be in much estimation for the table.

It runs fast, with long strides and the body near the ground. It moves with ease on the leaves of water-plants, that float on the surface, and if need be swims with equal readiness. It flies in an unsteady straggling manner, with the legs drooped down, and quite low, but at the season of migration has been observed in the evening to rise high in the air.

The 'ways and means' are worms, slugs, aquatic insects, and the seeds of plants.

The nest is put together of the larger and smaller stalks of rushes, reeds, and other water-plants, in marshy places, among beds of reeds, and often at the water's edge, and so arranged as to be capable of floating on the water, being thickly lined with soft grass, and the edges well rounded. Nevertheless, they are at times destroyed by the rising of floods.

The eggs are as many as from seven, eight, nine, or ten, to twelve in number, and even eighteen have been found together, but these doubtless the produce of two birds. They are of a pale reddish white, or yellowish grey ground colour, spotted and speckled with dark reddish brown. The hen sits for three weeks to hatch the eggs. The young quit the nest very soon after being hatched.

Male; weight, about four ounces; length, about nine inches; bill, yellowish olive, the tip brown, the base dull orange, or reddish brown; iris, dark reddish brown, over it is a streak of purple grey, minutely spotted with white. Forehead, purple grey; head on the sides, greyish green, spotted with black; on the crown, dark brownish black, the feathers edged with yellowish brown, and speckled with white; the neck on the back, and the nape, olivaceous brown, the centre of each feather with a dusky spot, the latter also with white edges; the neck on the sides is greyish olive green, each feather barred and spotted on the tip with white, with a narrow border of black. Chin, dark grey, spotted with white; throat, purple grey, minutely spotted with white; breast above, dull greenish grey, spotted with white, on the sides barred with black, white, and olivaceous brown; below grey, or pale buff white, on the sides leaden grey, barred with white; back above, dark olive brown, each feather with a black centre, and longitudinally streaked with white; below, dark olive green, the feathers marked with white lines surrounded by a narrow border of black.

The wings have the axillary feathers dark brown, barred narrowly with white; greater and lesser wing coverts, olivaceous green, tinged with yellowish brown, with a dusky spot on the centre of each feather, and other white spots surrounded by a line of black. Primaries, very dark dusky brown, tinted with olive green, with the outer web of the first feather white; tertiaries, long, transversely streaked with narrow white lines surrounded by a broad shade of black. Tail, black in the middle of the feathers, their edges brown and spotted with white; it is rather rounded at the end, the centre feathers being the longest; upper tail coverts, black in the middle, margined with pale greenish olive and brown, and spotted with white; under tail coverts, grey, or pale buff white. Legs and toes, which are long, olive yellow; claws, brown.

The female is like the male. Head on the sides, reddish, spotted with brown.

The young, on their first appearance, are entirely covered with black down; the bill red at the tip and the base, the middle part black; afterwards they have the bill greener, and tinged with dusky, the tip brown; the eyebrows deep grey with numerous white specks; head on the sides, chin, and throat, greyish white, with a few darker specks; the upper parts more greenish with fewer white spots, and more rounded; the breast below, more white, the quills deep brown; the legs greener in colour, and tinged with dusky grey.

LITTLE CRAKE.

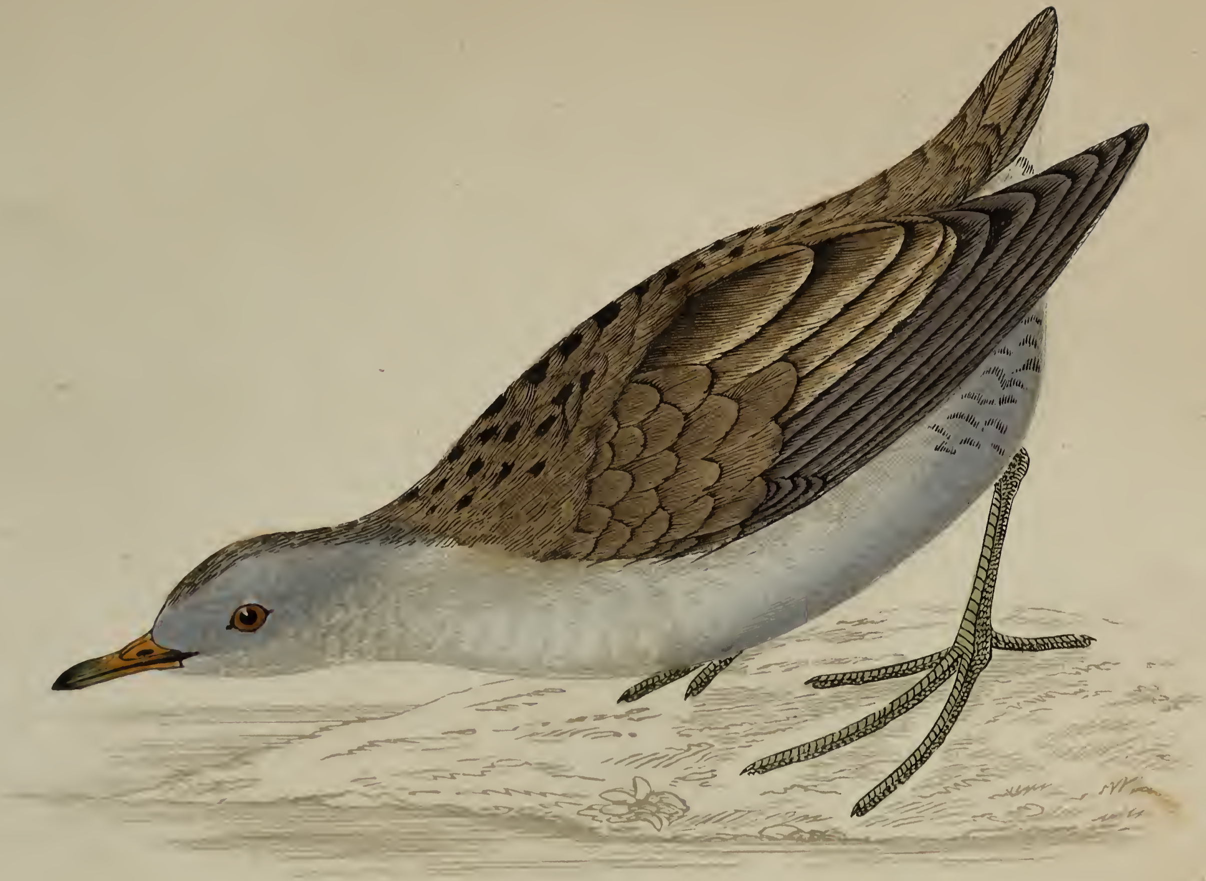
OLIVACEOUS CRAKE. LITTLE GALLINULE. DWARF RAIL.

Crex pusilla,	SELBY. JENYNS.
Gallinula minuta,	MONTAGU. BEWICK.
“ *Foljambei,*	MONTAGU. BEWICK.
“ *pusilla,*	FLEMING.
Zapornia pusilla,	GOULD.
Rallus pusillus,	LATHAM.

Crex—...........? *Pusilla*—Small--little.

THIS Crake is not uncommon in the southern parts of Europe, for instance, in Italy, Germany, Turkey, Hungary, and the sunny side of France, and also is obtained in Holland. It has been found also in Asia, namely, in Persia and Japan, according to M. Temminck.

In this country it is a rare species. The first recorded specimen occurred in Yorkshire, May the 6th., 1807, on the ‘Banks of the Yore,’ a locality since made of some celebrity in the ‘Poet's Corner’ of the ‘Yorkshire Gazette.’ In the same year one, in the autumn, at Adwick, by Manchester. The next near Ashburton, in Devonshire, in the year 1809, and was figured and described by Colonel Montagu. Another was obtained in Norfolk, in May, 1812, and again, another in the same year on the banks of the Thames, near Chelsea. In March, 1826, one, a female, was caught at Barnwell, near Cambridge. In 1834, one was shot near Yarmouth, Norfolk, and another, a male, at Heigham, in that county, March 30th., 1847. In October, 1835, one taken on the bank of the Adur, at Beeding, near Shoreham, Sussex. In 1836, another in Yorkshire, near Scarborough; and one many years ago was captured at Cantley, near Doncaster, the seat



LITTLE CRAKE.

of John Walbanke Childers, Esq., M.P. One also in Derbyshire, near Derby, received by the Rev. Thomas Gisborne, of Yoxall Lodge. It is said to have occurred at Godalming, in Surrey.

One of these birds was found dead in a plantation on the banks of the Isla, at Thornton, in the parish of Grange, near Banff, N. B., on the 12th. of March, 1852. This is believed by Mr. Edward, of that place, who has recorded the circumstance in the 'Banffshire Journal,' to be the first authenticated instance of the species having been met with in Scotland. In the 'Zoologist,' page 1702, one is mentioned as having been met with near Yarmouth, in March, 1847.

The Little Crake is not only habituated to low grounds and meadows, both marshy and dry, and the sides of rivulets, but also at times occurs in more elevated and cultivated situations.

It is easily kept in confinement, and becomes very sociable.

These birds perch at times on the branches of trees. In moving along the ground, which they do with great velocity, or over the surface of the water-plants, which they tread on so lightly as hardly to seem to make any impression on them, the body is carried in an horizontal manner, the tail generally lowered, but sometimes erected, and the head and neck thrown back. They swim well, and dive, if need be. Their flight is performed close to the earth, and is wavering in its character, and seldom prolonged to any distance. If alarmed, they run for shelter, in preference, for the most part, to seeking safety by flying; they have the capability of immersing themselves beneath the water, keeping only the bill above so as to be able to breathe. Meyer says, 'The present species has a very great peculiarity that belongs solely to itself, namely, its curiosity; if a person who is acquainted with the habits of the bird very carefully approaches the spot where an individual is known to be, it will be seen to come to the edge of the swamp and utter its piping call-note, as it were in astonishment at what it sees.' It appears not to be shy in its habits.

Its food consists of minute snails and small mollusks, beetles, insects, flies, gnats, grasshoppers, water-spiders, and other insects, and their larvæ; the winged kinds it is expert at catching as they fly.

Nidification commences at the end of May or the beginning of June.

The nest, of considerable size, is placed either in a tuft of rushes or upon the water itself, supported in the latter case, on the stalks of rushes or other aquatic plants, bent down and intermingled with grass, the adjoining materials of the like kind being drawn in a hood-like manner over it.

The eggs are from seven or eight to ten in number, smooth, without much polish, and of a light olive brown or yellowish or greenish white colour, spotted with darker brown.

The young run out of the nest almost directly after being hatched.

Male; weight, two ounces; length, about seven inches, or from that to seven and three quarters; bill, long and slender, deep green, pale yellowish red at the base. Iris, crimson red; the head on the sides is of a slate grey colour; on the crown, the neck on the back and nape, dusky brown with a yellow olive tinge; chin, greyish white; throat, slate grey colour, the latter on the sides brown; breast above, pale fawn-colour, below, olive brown spotted with white and slightly barred with paler brown. Back above, deep olive green, black on the middle part, forming a broad streak, the feathers margined with olive brown, the inner margins pale with some white streaks and spots; below, olive brown.

The wings have the first and second quill feathers of nearly equal length, and longer than the first; greater wing coverts, with white tips surrounded by a line of black; lesser wing coverts, plain dull olive green; primaries, dark dusky brown, tinged with dull olive green; tertiaries, dark brownish black on the centres of the feathers, the edges dull greenish olive. Tail, dark dusky olive brown; upper tail coverts, dark dusky brown; under tail coverts, dark slate grey colour, spotted and crossed with white. The legs and toes, which are long, are of a deep olive green colour; they are bare of feathers for not quite half an inch above the knee; the hind toe is considerably produced; claws, horn-colour.

The female has the eyebrows pale grey; head about the eyes, pale ash grey colour; crown, pale brown; neck on the back and sides, pale brown, in front delicate whitish buff-colour; chin, white; throat, greyish white; breast, pale whitish buff-colour, on the sides barred with the colours of Shakespeare's witches—'white, black, and grey;' back on the middle part, nearly black, with some white marks sparely scattered. Greater and lesser wing coverts, dark on the middle of the feathers, their edges broadly marked with pale brown, the inner margins lighter in colour than the outer ones; primaries, dusky brown; tertiaries, dark in the middle of the feathers, brown on the edges. Tail, dark brown; upper tail coverts, dark brown also; under tail coverts, barred with grey or yellowish brown and white spots.

The young are at first covered with black down, afterwards they resemble the female.

BAILLON'S CRAKE.

Crex Baillonii,	JENYNS.
Gallinula Baillonii,	TEMMINCK.
Zapornia Baillonii,	STEPHENS.
Ortygometra Baillonii,	SHAW.

Crex—...........?   *Baillonii*—Of Baillon.

THE name of this species was assigned to it by Temminck, in honour of M. Baillon, an eminent naturalist of Abbeville, in Picardy.

It is found in different parts of Germany, Italy, Hungary, Greece, Switzerland, and Dalmatia, and is said to breed in some of the northern provinces of "La belle France" along the coast, and to be by no means uncommon in that district. It belongs likewise to the continents of Asia and America, and to the islands of the former, having been found, according to M. Temminck, in Japan.

In Cambridgeshire, one of these Crakes was caught at Melbourn, in January, 1823; in Norfolk it has occurred, but is very rare. A specimen was obtained near Deal, Kent, the 19th. of September, 1850, by C. A. Delmar, Esq.; he subsequently procured a second in the same locality, in the latter part of October, 1851.

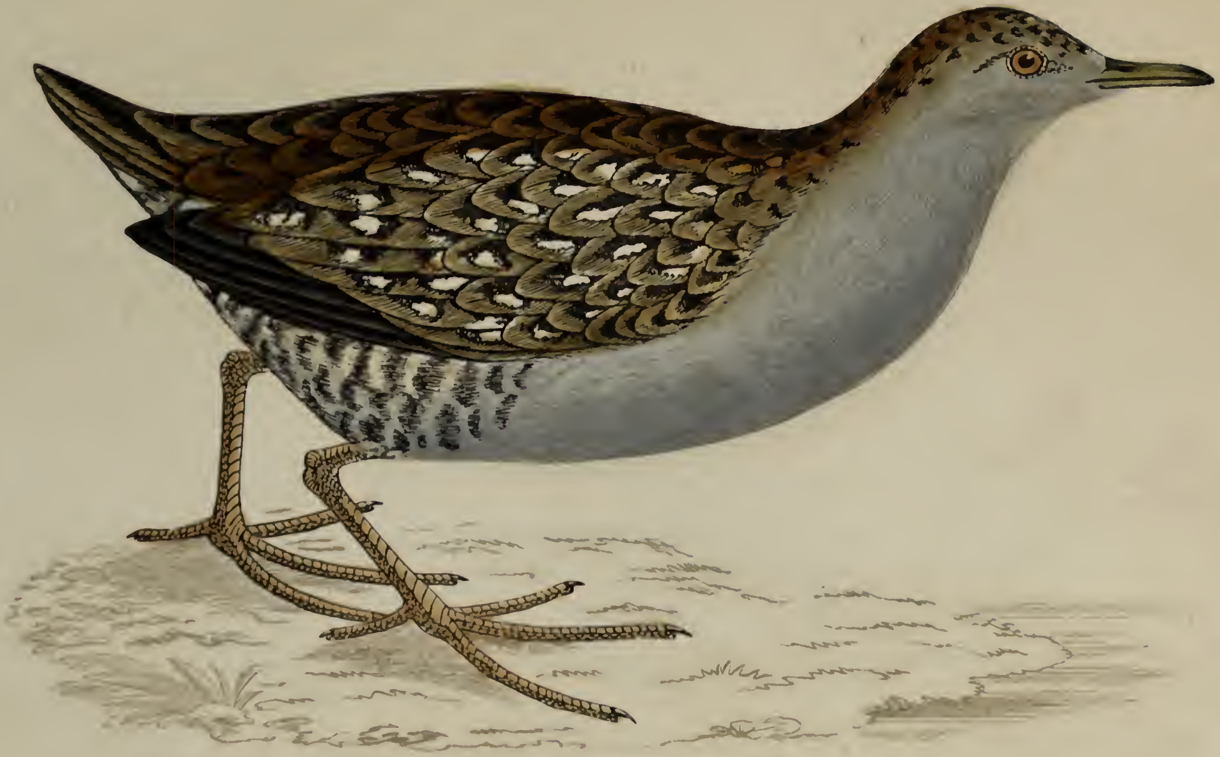
In Ireland one was taken at Clay Castle, near Youghal, in the county of Cork, on the 30th. of October, 1845.

This bird appertains to low and marshy situations by the sides of rivers, ditches, and water-courses.

In this country specimens have been obtained in each of the four quarters of the year, but few have been noticed, owing to the shyness of their habits.

The species soon becomes reconciled to confinement.

It is capable of running with almost inconceivable dexterity among the thickest of the coverts which it frequents. It is raised from these with difficulty, and if compelled to get



BAILLON'S CRAKE.

up, only flies a short distance. It can, however, make more prolonged flights with comparative ease. It swims well, and can dive, if need be for it to do so, keeping, when still, the point of the bill only above the water.

Its food is made of water-insects and their larvæ, slugs, spiders, and beetles, as also of the seeds and leaves of plants.

The note is reported as an almost indescribable sort of low whistle.

The nest of this Crake is made near the water's edge, in the moist situations which the bird itself frequents, among long grass, flags, or rushes, and is very difficult to find. Its component parts are the stems and leaves of water-plants, sedge, and grasses.

The eggs are seven or eight to ten in number, and of a regular oval form. Their colour is greyish white, spotted with yellowish brown. The hen bird is said, on leaving them, to add to the nest the concealment of the surrounding and overhanging herbage.

Male; length, from five inches and a half to six and a half—Sir William Jardine says that his Scotch specimen measured only four inches in length at the most; bill, dark olive green. Iris, reddish brown; head in front and on the sides, bluish slate-colour; on the crown, the centres of the feathers being darker, the neck on the back and nape, yellowish brown; chin and throat, grey; breast, bluish slate-colour, with bars of black and white on the sides; back, yellowish brown, with a tinge of olive green, with round and triangular-shaped white spots, surrounded with black, and some of them with black centres in addition, forming a list extending downwards.

Greater and lesser wing coverts, yellowish brown with a tint of dull green, and varied with white spots and streaks, barred or edged with black; primaries, dusky brown; the outer edge of the first quill feather is white; secondaries, with zigzag white lines bordered with black; tertiaries, yellowish brown with a tinge of dull green, and spotted or streaked irregularly with white, with edgings or bars of black. The tail has the middle feathers dusky brown; under tail coverts, unevenly barred with greyish white and dull black. Legs and toes, pale yellowish or olive green reddish brown.

The female is like the male, but her colouring is paler.

In the young the throat and breast on the middle part are white, with uneven bars of brown. The sides olive with spots of white. The back has fewer of the white spots.

WATER-RAIL.

BILCOCK. BROOK-RUNNER. RUNNER.

Rallus aquaticus, PENNANT. MONTAGU.

Rallus—.........? *Aquaticus*—Aquatic—belonging to water.

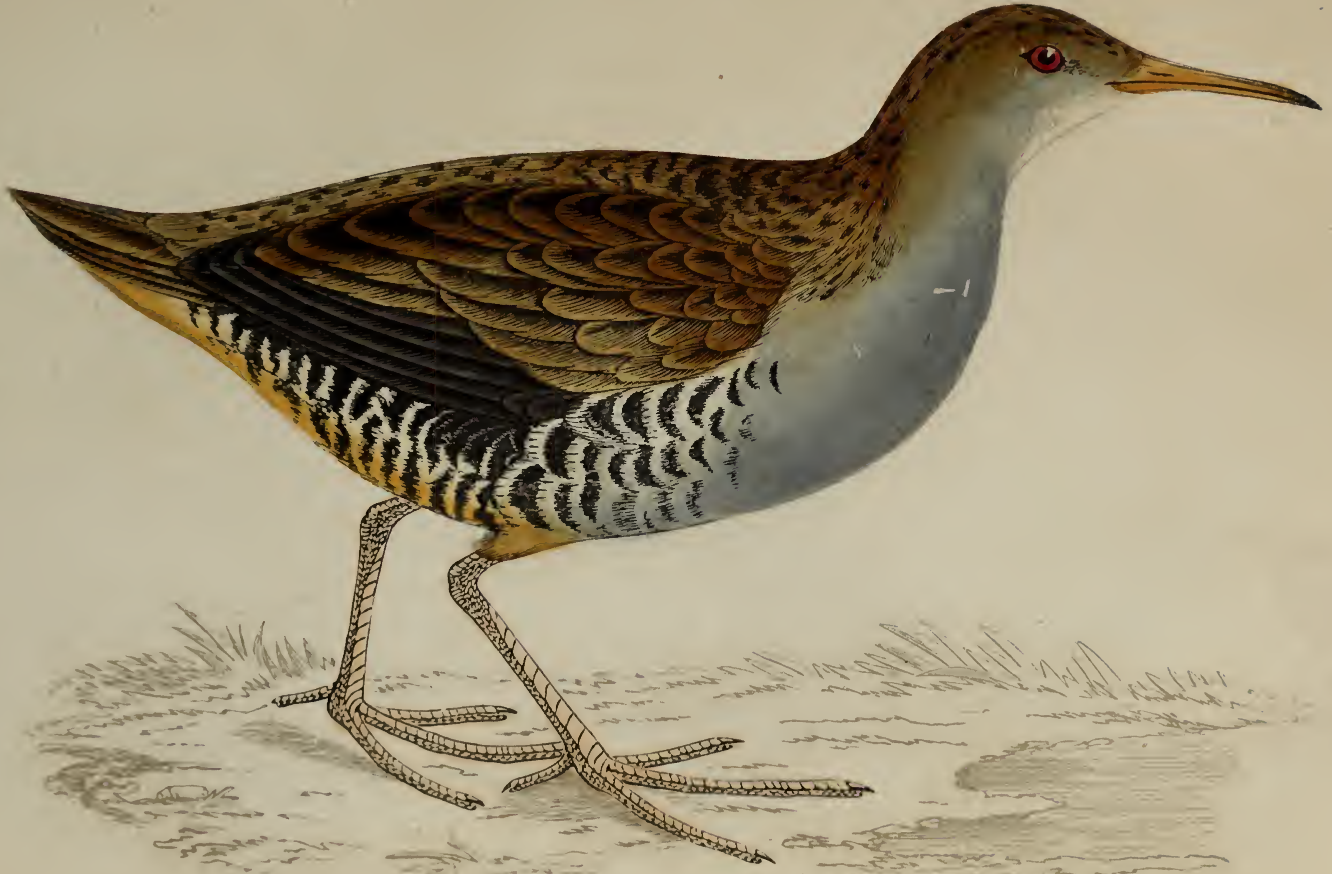
THE Water-Rail is, in Europe, found in Germany, France, Holland, Switzerland, Spain, Italy, and Malta, Iceland and the Ferroe Islands, Norway and Sweden, though but rarely. It has been noticed also in Asia, in Asia Minor and the region of the Caucasus; and, Bewick says, migrates into Africa in winter.

It is not a plentiful species, except in the Fen counties, but yet can by no means be called rare in suitable situations in any part of the kingdom.

This Rail frequents the sides of rivers, streams, water-courses, pools, ditches, and ponds, and any swamps or marshy places in their vicinity, where the strong vegetation gives it shelter.

In Cambridgeshire, the Rev. Leonard Jenyns relates that it occasionally is met with near Bottisham, as it no doubt is in many other parts in that district. In Norfolk it is abundant; it breeds in several parts of the county, and remains throughout the year.

In Yorkshire, it is more or less commonly met with in the neighbourhood of York, Burlington, Sheffield, Leeds, Doncaster, Barnsley, Hebden Bridge, and Halifax, near which place, namely, at Saltershebble, a young bird was shot. I have seen them at Wansford, in the parish of Nafferton; and in Berkshire, near East Garston. One was shot in the neighbourhood of Blaydon Burn, in the county of Durham,



WATER RAIL.

in January, 1854, John William Bell, Esq. informs me, one only having been heard of about there before.

In Sutherlandshire, Mr. St. John says that they are not uncommon in the winter. In Orkney, the 'Natural History of Orkney' informs us that it is found all the year. It was formerly abundant about the Loch of Aikerness, but since that was drained, has disappeared in that quarter. It is sometimes seen at Crantit, near Kirkwall, and is not uncommon in Sanday.

In Ireland it is resident and indigenous.

Some breed here. They have been known to do so near Odiham, in Hampshire; in the county of Norfolk, near Brandon; also at Kingston; and near Melbourne, in Derbyshire; and have been seen in summer in Cambridgeshire, in Guy Fen, near Cambridge; and in fact in various parts of the country.

Individuals have been killed in the winter months of December, January, and February.

It is, at all events partially, a migratory species, and in severe winters the numbers of these birds seem to be increased, perhaps from the north. In May they move. They have, on different occasions, been met with at sea, far from any land. Buffon has recorded one instance where a flight of them were seen fifty leagues from the shore, some of which were so fatigued that they were taken with the hand. Another alighted on one of the yards of a man-of-war, five hundred miles from any land, in the Atlantic Ocean, and was also captured.

This is a very good bird to eat. It is preserved without difficulty in confinement, and associates amicably with other birds, but is naturally shy and vigilant, and does not appear to become very tame. One is mentioned by Yarrell as having exhibited a pugnacious disposition. Another, kept by Meyer, would snap its food from a pair of Godwits kept with it. The way in which it had been obtained was singular:—It appeared to have taken refuge in a hen-house, and on the owner putting in her hand to take the eggs, caught hold of it, and so it was drawn out. The Water-Rail seems to suffer from severe weather. If pursued, it will creep into some hole, and allow itself to be taken with the hand.

The Water-Rail flies slow and near the ground, with the legs hanging down, and in an apparently weak manner, as if unable to rise over any height. As it is at first difficult to make it rise, so it drops again as soon as it can, into the nearest hiding-place. It runs with remarkable swiftness in its natural resorts, threading its way among the closest stalks, or wading in shallow water, and can also make its way with readiness over the ice, or along a rail, or on the branch of a tree, as well as over the floating weeds on the top of the water. It dives readily, if desirous to escape from any danger, and exhibits the same flirtation of the tail that other birds of its kind do when walking about.

Its food consists of water-insects, worms, young frogs, slugs, small snails, and insects. One has been known to have devoured a full-grown shrew mouse; and another was found dead by means of a fish of the kind called Miller's Thumb, which 'faucibus hæsit.'

The nest, which is built of sedge, flags, and grass, is abstrusely concealed among the thickest herbage; frequently in willow-beds. Mr. Wolley mentions one which was built upon rushes floating on the water, and another upon a clump close to its margin.

The eggs are covered with small specks of greyish ash-colour and reddish brown, on a dull cream-coloured white ground; some are almost spotless. They are from seven to ten in number.

Male; weight, from four ounces and a half to six ounces; length, from eleven inches to eleven and a half, or nearly twelve; bill, clear reddish orange at the base, fading into dusky at the tip; the red prevails more over, or rather under the lower mandible than the upper. Iris, red; over it is a streak of bluish slate-colour; head on the sides, bluish slate-colour; on the crown, neck on the back, and nape, dusky yellowish olivaceous brown, the centres of the feathers black in an oval shape; neck on the sides and chin, greyish white; throat and breast, dark bluish slate-colour, the last-named barred on the sides with black, cream-colour, and white, the tips of the feathers reddish brown. Back, dusky yellowish olive brown, the whole centre of each feather nearly velvet black, and the edges margined with brown.

The wings, when closed, do not reach above half the length of the tail—the axillary feathers barred with black and white; of the lesser wing coverts, a few are barred with black and white; primaries, dusky brown; secondaries, dusky brown; tertiaries, dusky olivaceous brown, the centre of each feather black in an oval shape. The tail, of twelve feathers, is dusky, the edges of the feathers olive brown, leaving only a little of the centre black: in flirting up the tail, this species also displays the white underneath. Under tail coverts, dull cream-coloured white, the bases of the feathers black, the tips reddish brown. Legs and toes, which latter are long, pale reddish brown or greenish, the joints of a bluish tint.

The female resembles the male, but the bill is shorter and paler.

The young have the throat and breast barred with pale brown on the margins of the feathers; the breast also without the white bars on the sides, and paler likewise in colour than in the adult.

Montagu says, 'In some there are a few feathers at the elbow of the wing, on the coverts, that are barred black and white, and the tail feathers margined with brown; the middle ones wholly olivaceous brown. Others have the feathers on the fore part of the neck margined with white; but the last variety, as mentioned by other authors, we believe is more rare.' White varieties have occasionally occurred.

MOOR-HEN.

WATER-HEN. COMMON GALLINULE. MOAT-HEN. MOOR-COOT. MARSH-HEN.

Gallinula chloropus,	PENNANT. MONTAGU.
Fulica chloropus,	BEWICK. FLEMING.

Gallinula—...........? *Chloropus.* *Chloros*—Green. *Pous*—A foot.

THIS is a well-known bird throughout the continent of Europe, as in Holland, France, Germany, Spain, and Italy, but is least plentiful in Russia, Denmark, and Sweden. In Asia, it occurs in Siberia, Asia Minor, the countries between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea, and in Persia. In Africa it is also indigenous, even to the Cape.

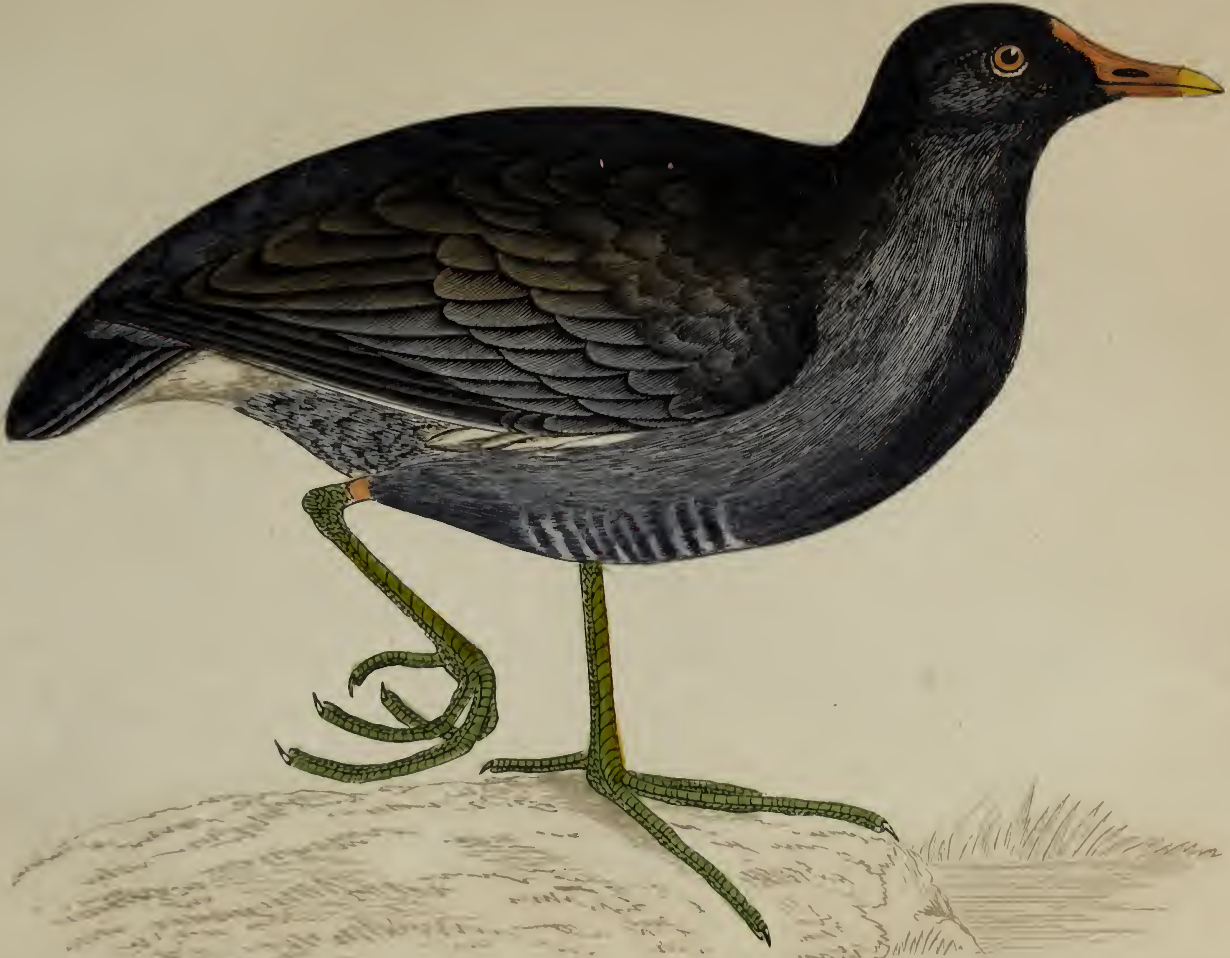
In Yorkshire the Moor-Hen is plentiful in most parts, but is said to be less so near Halifax and Hebden Bridge.

In Ireland it is common and indigenous.

In Orkney, while the Loch of Aikerness existed, it was abundant in that vicinity. It is, however, pretty common in various directions. It is found in several parts of Sanday. A few pairs have built their nests for some years in the meadow of Crantit, near Kirkwall.

Its haunts are among rushes, reeds, sedge, osiers, or brushwood of any kind, by the sides of ponds, lakes, moats, streams, and rivers, preferring such of the latter as are more 'slow and still,' or those parts of them that are so.

The Moor-Hen, if unmolested, though of a shy nature, soon becomes very familiar and tame, and will feed with domestic poultry, little heeding the approach of man. It is in fact, even in its wild state, so to speak, a 'demi-semi' domesticated species. I have seen them on waters where they are not



MOORHEN.

disturbed, heedless of near approach, and tolerant of passers-by on an adjoining public road. The Rev. R. P. Alington has had them come of their own accord into this hall, and pick up crumbs, and on being disturbed, they would quietly run out of the door, stop, turn a wistful glance of regret back, and commence feeding outside.

Pennant mentions a pair which would come to him to feed with poultry when called; and there are some now so tame on the ornamental waters in St. James' Park, that they will come close to those who offer them food.

Bishop Stanley writes of the Moor-Hen:—'In the middle of any such little open space she may usually be detected swimming about with a joyous sort of jerking motion, but on the least rustle exciting a suspicion that an enemy is near, gliding silently through the narrow channels, or running with a light tread over the floating leaves, to seek invisible shelter under the roots or hollows of the bank. Not that she always prefers the water, for often in the evening she may be seen wandering in the new-shorn grass of a hayfield, easily distinguishable by the white feathers underneath, and a peculiar jerk or flirting of the tail. But with all her shyness, she is, nevertheless, a tame and sociable bird; and if treated with kindness, will shew a marked confidence. We have seen Water-Hens visiting the lawn of an enclosed garden, and remaining there, notwithstanding the constant intrusion of parlour dogs, peacocks, and tame pheasants; and again, not unfrequent intruders in a barn-yard, mixing in a party of poultry.

But at the residence of a clergyman near Cheadle, in Staffordshire, a much more striking instance of familiarity has for some years occurred. Adjacent to the lawn there is a moat, on which a pair of Water-Hens were observed for several seasons, always, however, leaving it in the spring. By being constantly fed they in time became quite tame, and at length were induced to breed there, from the circumstance of a thorn bush, covered with ivy, having fallen into the water, in which they afterwards continued to build their nest. When the young are a few days old, the old ones bring them up close to the drawing-room window, where they are regularly fed with wheat: and as the lady of the house pays them the greatest attention, they have learned to look up to her as their natural protectress and friend, so much so, that one bird in particular, which was much persecuted by the rest, would, when attacked, fly to her for refuge; and whenever she calls, the whole flock, as tame as barn-door fowls, quit the water and assemble around her, to the number of seventeen. (November, 1833.)

They have also made other friends in the dogs belonging to the family, approaching them without fear, but hurrying off in great alarm on the appearance of any strange dog. The position of the water, together with the familiarity of these birds, have afforded many interesting particulars respecting their habits.'

They increase in numbers very rapidly, as will appear only natural from the account to be presently given of the number of broods produced in the year. The old birds, nevertheless, are very combative among themselves, and extremely tenacious of their territorial rights. If protected they will keep long to the same situation. They are excellent eating.

If they have not oftener been known to come to doors, to forage with fowls, it is only because they have met with discouragement instead of the contrary. In gardens they will do, it must be allowed, considerable damage sometimes both to fruit and vegetables.

These birds have the power of submerging their bodies beneath the water, while only the bill, or little more than the bill, is kept above it. This has been conclusively proved by W. H. Slaney, Esq., of Hatton Hall, Shropshire, in the 'Zoologist.' They have also been known, when pursued, to dive to the bottom and remain there till almost dead, sooner than be taken. I remember once hooking one accidentally when fly-fishing, as it was swimming from one side of the brook to the other. They take part of their food also below the surface, as is proved by their having been captured by means of baits set for fish—'the thief caught with the mainour.' The one just mentioned was, I think, diving at the time. They spend most of their life in the water.

The late Bishop of Norwich records the following very curious instance of apparent reasoning power in one of these birds:—'But it is not only in their instinctive attachments and habits that they merit notice. The following anecdote proves that they are gifted with a sense of observation approaching to something very like reasoning faculties:—At a gentleman's house in Staffordshire, the Pheasants are fed out of one of those boxes described in page 308, the lid of which rises with the pressure of the Pheasant standing on the rail in front of the box. A Water-Hen observing this, went and stood upon the rail as soon as the Pheasant had quitted it; but the weight of the bird being insufficient to raise the lid of the box, so as to enable it to get at the corn, the Water-Hen kept jumping on the rail to give additional impetus to its weight; this partially succeeded, but not to the satisfaction of the sagacious bird. Accordingly it went off, and soon returning with another bird of its own species, the united weight of the two had the desired effect, and the successful pair enjoyed the benefit of their ingenuity. We can vouch for the truth of this singular instance of penetration, on the authority of the owner of the place where it occurred, and who witnessed the fact.'

The flight of this species is, for the most part, low as well as slow, with the legs drooping down. During the fine warm nights of summer they may, at times, be heard, that is the male birds, flying about and uttering their note over-head at a considerable height in the air. If disturbed in open water, the Moor-Hen will take to its wings, but if near the nest, or in the proximity of cover, will, if it does not use that mode of escape, resort to diving, and after the latter, especially if pursued by a dog, will seldom rise to the surface again, but remain submerged, the bill only being kept up for the purpose of breathing. For a conclusive essay on this power possessed by various water-birds, I refer my readers, as I have already done in a former instance, to a paper by my brother, Beverley R. Morris, Esq., in the 'Naturalist,' volume i. The Moor-Hen not unfrequently scales trees of the smaller size. I have found one on the top of an ivy-covered thorn bush, some ten or twelve feet from the ground: such a place, or the head of a lopped oak is a favourite resort. I have frequently observed others going to roost in alder trees, scrambling along the branches at a like height.

They seem, when in such situations during the day-time, to like to keep near the trunk, at least in fir-trees. They are then easily approached quite close, and only quit on being alarmed. If surprised on the land they will either run or fly to the nearest cover or water, or combine the two motions, and then hide in a hole, or under or among the vegetation. They progress beneath the water by the united action of both wings and legs, the expanded membrane of the toes assisting their advance. They are good swimmers, and run expertly also over the water-plants. It is pretty to watch them picking out their steps along a railing, as they may at times be seen to do, and still more so when on the bending boughs of some small tree, which give way beneath their weight, but on which they nevertheless keep their hold and adroitly balance themselves, although their feet are so ill-adapted, from their size, for such performances that they can afford but very little comparative help. It is curious also to see how cleverly they will thread their way out from the middle of a thick bush, without any apparent ruffling of their feathers. When walking, or swimming, they frequently toss up their heads, and have a constant habit of flirting the tail. The former motion is also constantly practised when the bird is feeding on the water, as it pecks first on one side and then on the other in succession. The young, when only a very few days old, begin to forage for themselves. They take to the water instinctively.

The Rev. W. T. Bree, of Allesley Rectory, Warwickshire, gives the following account in the 'Zoologist,' page 2801, of the feigning of death by one of these birds, in a similar manner to that already narrated of the Land-Rail. He says, 'Walking by the side of a mill-pond, I started a Water-Hen, which rose out of the sedges close under my feet, and flying not more than about thirty yards, settled in a wide ditch of water, which formed part of the pool tail; on going directly up to the spot, I saw a Water-Hen (the same, I conclude, that I had just before flushed,) lying on the surface of the water, in the middle of the ditch, perfectly motionless, and with its head apparently under water, at least I could perceive no portion of its head or neck. I stood viewing it for some seconds, and took it for a dead bird; but on gently stirring once or twice with a spud I had in my hand, it began to move, and springing up flew into an adjoining osier-bed. Was this bird feigning death as a means of security; or why did it not take shelter among the flags which abounded on either side of the ditch?

A few years ago, I was present at the dragging of a river, when a Water-Hen became entangled in the net and was captured; it retained such fast hold with its long claws among the meshes of the net, that it was with difficulty we could release it, and some slight degree of force perhaps might have been employed in the attempt. After the bird was extricated, and laid upon the bare turf of the meadow, it appeared to be nearly dead, and was unable to stand. Some means were resorted to in way of cherishing, in the hope of restoring animation, but all apparently to no purpose. As life however was not quite extinct, and with a view to give the bird a chance, it was placed among the flags on the margin of the river, when, to our surprise, it immediately roused itself up, and ran away into closer shelter as brisk as if nothing had happened to it. Are we to suppose that in either or both these instances the Water-Hen feigned death for the sake of defence? In the latter instance it may possibly be urged that the bird had been so terrified as to have been almost frightened to death; but in the former, no further alarm had been given to the Water-Hen except what was occasioned by my having accidentally intruded upon its haunts.'

They feed severally in the morning or the evening, on the water or the land, on water-insects, larvæ, slugs, worms, grasshoppers, grain, small mollusks, seeds, grasses, water-cresses, and other plants, the latter being of especial service in hard weather, when they are frozen out from their other and ordinary sources; but even with this provision they appear weak and languid in very hard winters, whether from the severity of the cold, or the failure of a sufficient amount of their more proper food. H. T. Partridge, Esq., of Hockham Hall, near Thetford, Norfolk, relates the following curious fact in the 'Zoologist,' page 4255:—'At the beginning of July, the keeper having lost several Pheasants about three weeks old, from a copse, and having set traps in vain for winged and four-footed vermin, determined to keep watch for the aggressor, when, after some time, a Moor-Hen was seen walking about near the copse; the keeper, supposing that it only came to eat the young Pheasants' food, did not shoot it until he saw the Moor-Hen strike a Pheasant, which it killed immediately, and devoured all the young bird except the leg and wing bones. The remains agreed exactly with those of eight found before. Perfect confidence may be placed in the correctness of this statement.' They wander at times into stubble fields, in the neighbourhood of their usual haunts, in search of food, or even venture into the farmer's stack-yard.

The note is a mere cry or sort of chirping call, moderately loud.

The nest, which is large, is strongly put together, though only of rough workmanship, and is commonly found well concealed among reeds, long grass, or the roots of trees, just above the water's edge, on the margin of a stream or by a bank. One has been known as much as three feet above the surface, on the stump of a tree, even on the lower branches of a fir, or in a thorn bush at that elevation. The Rev. Leonard Jenyns has recorded an instance in which it was constructed among the ivy encircling a large elm, which hung over the water's edge, at the height of at least ten feet from the ground. A writer in the 'Magazine of Natural History' mentions another placed in a fir tree twenty feet above the water. He says 'there was a reason for it, the rising of the water in the pond frequently flooded the banks of the island, and, as I had before witnessed, had destroyed several broods.' One was built upon the branches of a willow overhanging the lake at Castle Howard, at a height of four or five feet above the water.

The nest has been known quite unattached to any fixture, though surrounded by loose sticks, and thus at the mercy of the winds and waves. The birds have been observed both to hatch their eggs after being removed in part of the nest to another place, and also themselves to remove them, when threatened with destruction by the rising of the water, fresh materials being in each case brought together. J. H. Gurney, Esq. and W. R. Fisher, Esq. have recorded an instance in which they knew the nest of a Moor-Hen placed in a fir plantation at a distance of a quarter of a mile from any water. I have seen one myself placed at some height over the water on a fallen branch of a tree, which formed a natural bridge over a river.

The Rev. J. C. Atkinson, writing in the 'Zoologist,' page 767, observes of the Moor-Hen, that it 'occasionally at least, builds a second nest, to accommodate a moiety of its young, when they have attained a size too large to permit the original one to contain them all; and when the colony is sent to the second nest, one of the old birds accompanies it. An instance of this habit occurred in the vicinity of my father's residence, when I was last at home. The female Moor-Hen was the architect, and the subsidiary nest she busied herself in constructing was built on a bough overhanging the water. The weight of the structure at last became too great for the bough to bear; it gave way and the nest was destroyed by its own weight, which caused it to fall to pieces when it lost its horizontal position. The old bird seemed to be much annoyed at the perversity of the bough and nest, or else at her own want of foresight, and pecked among the 'debris' with every symptom of rage. She soon, however, renewed her labours, after having selected a more favourable site, and this time the structure was successfully finished. Another nest in a pond near my father's garden, was, after two or three eggs had been deposited, beautifully lined with last year's oak leaves, regularly arranged with their points directed upwards.'

'During the breeding season,' says Dr. Stanley, 'they are constantly adding materials to their nests, making sad havoc in the flower gardens; for though straw and leaves are their chief ingredients, they seem to have an eye for beauty, and the old hen has been seen surrounded with a brilliant wreath of scarlet anemones. As in this case, so do they usually build their nests on stumps of trees or convenient bushes, by the side of the water; and artlessly formed, as it is, of a few rushes, one might suppose it would be easily discovered, which would be the case but for the caution adopted by the bird, who, before she quits her eggs, covers them carefully up, for the joint purpose of concealment and warmth.

A person fishing on the bank of the Thames, when passing a willow-bed, heard a slight rustling motion. Suspecting it to proceed from some water bird, he kneeled down and remained perfectly quiet, when the noise ceased. On rising and looking about, he saw a Water-Hen busily employed in collecting dry rushes and flags, and laying them one by one over her eggs, deposited in one of those bare nests close beside her. It was not long before she had completely hidden them; and then looking round with a cautious glance, not aware that her motions were observed, softly and silently glided away amongst the reeds, and disappeared. On a nearer approach, strange to say, the nest was with difficulty found; and no one who had not previously ascertained its existence was thereabouts, could possibly have discovered it.

We have said that they usually build either on a level with, or very little raised above the water, but not invariably so; for, although almost entirely confined to the water, as their abiding as well as feeding-place, they will not only perch on trees when roosting, but even build their nests at a considerable elevation above the ground. An instance of this occurred in Surrey, where the attention of a person who had landed upon an island in the middle of a large pond, was drawn to a mass of dry rushes, flags, and reeds, strangely heaped together, about twenty feet above the ground in a spruce fir tree. Curiosity induced him to climb up, when, to his surprise, out crept a Water-Hen, which dropped into the pond and made off towards the shore.'

The eggs are usually five, six, seven, or eight in number; nine or ten have, however, been often seen in one nest. They are of a reddish or yellowish white colour, spotted and speckled all over with reddish brown, they vary exceedingly in size. Three broods are commonly reared in the year, sometimes, it has been thought, even four; the first eggs are laid the end of April, or in May, and are, in early seasons or localities hatched in the latter month, but otherwise the beginning of June. It is a curious fact, first pointed out to me by Mr. Alington, that the youngest brood is carefully and kindly attended to by that which is its elder, as both are at the same time by the parents, but when a third comes, it is to the abandonment of the first.

The late Bishop of Norwich, Dr. Stanley, also mentions this fostership:—He says, 'They have three broods in a season; the first early in April, and they begin to lay again when the first hatch is about a fortnight old. They lay eight or nine eggs, and sit about three weeks, the cock alternately with the hen. The nest in the thorn bush is placed usually so high above the surface of the water, that when the young are first hatched, and have quitted it, they cannot climb into it again; but as a substitute, within an hour after they leave the nest, the cock-bird builds a larger and more roomy nest for them with sedges, at the water's edge, which they can enter or retire from at pleasure. For about a month they are fed by the old birds, but soon become very active in taking flies and water-insects. Immediately on the second hatch coming out, the young ones of the first hatch assist the old ones in feeding and hovering over them, leading them out in detached parties, and making additional nests for them, similar to their own on the brink of the moat.

On the appearance of the third brood, the old ones invariably drive the first away to a neighbouring pond, where they remain until September, when the first hatch is about half-grown.

About this time a fresh party of birds makes its appearance, which, from their tameness, is, no doubt, composed of broods formerly bred there, and in the moat the united families remain until the following spring, when the original pair drive all the rest away, but not without many severe and curious contests, frequently in the water, when they throw themselves on their backs, and strike at each other with their feet. When either of the combatants begins to find himself worsted, he dives and does not re-appear, thus eluding his adversary by hiding his whole body under water, and merely exposing his beak for respiration.'

Incubation continues three weeks. The young soon leave the nest, still attended by their mother, who leads them to the water, but, for a time, they return to it at night for shelter. The hen takes the young at times under her wings. The mother has been seen to fly down with a young bird in each foot, from the nest built a few feet over the water on the branch of a tree.

The plumage in this species is close and thick-set. Male; weight, from fourteen to sixteen ounces, Bewick says from ten and a half to fifteen, but this may be accounted for by their emaciated condition in very severe weather; length, one foot one inch to one foot two; bill, greenish yellow, the base bright red, ascending up the forehead, both brightest in the spring; iris, dusky reddish. Head, small, and on the crown, as is the neck on the back and nape, deep blackish purple grey; throat and breast above, dark slate grey; below, margined with dull greyish white; on the sides streaked with white, and in the spring glossed with a reflection of green; back, very dark blackish brown, with a tinge of olive, brightest in the spring.

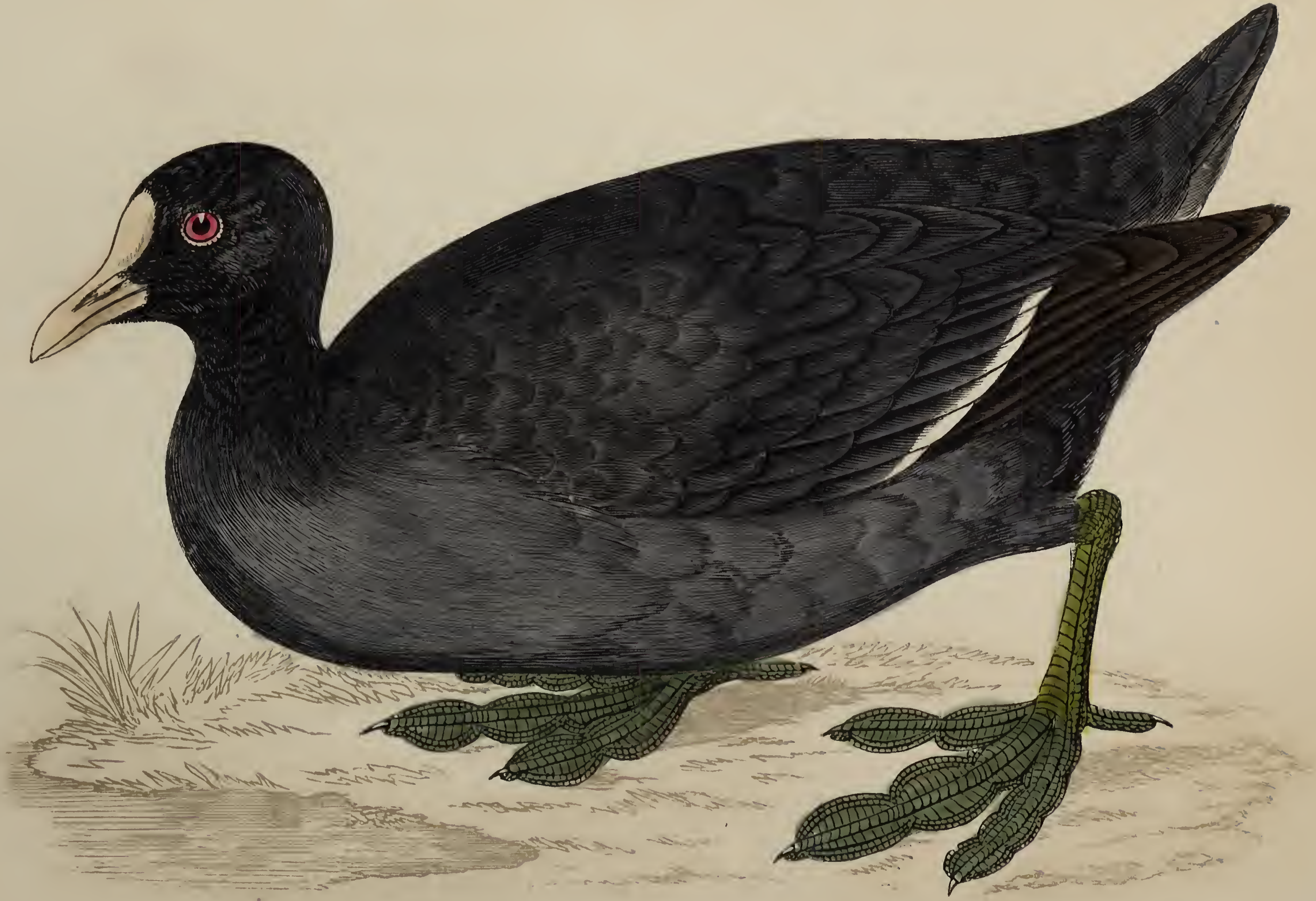
The wings have a white edge at the bend; primaries, greyish black. The tail, which is greyish black with a tint of deep green, is rounded at the tip; upper tail coverts, white, with some black feathers; the former colour is visibly shewn when the bird, as before mentioned, flirts up its tail. There are sometimes a few white feathers on the thighs. The legs, which are placed rather far backwards, are surrounded above the knee with a red band or garter, and are otherwise, as are the toes, which are very long, the hind one considerably produced as well as the others, pale dull green: the latter are fringed out with scales. Claws, dark brown.

The female is like the male, but is less in size; the red on the bill is deficient. The garter above the knee is also less bright.

The young are at first clothed in black hair-like down. In their subsequent plumage the bill is dull green, the base darkest; the patch on the forehead small, and partially covered with feathers; the head on the sides is a mixture of blackish brown and white; the neck on the sides yellowish brown; the throat brownish white; the breast ash grey, tinged with yellowish brown, paler below, and almost without the longitudinal white streaks; under tail coverts, yellowish; legs and toes, dull green.

One was killed at Branford, near Ipswich, Suffolk, the 16th. of December, 1847, which had the bill greenish yellow at the tip, and red at the base; the iris red; the head greyish black; breast, greyish white, inclining to chesnut on the sides, below black: the back light chesnut; the wing coverts, primaries, and tertiaries, black, edged with chesnut; the tail also black, edged with chesnut; upper tail coverts, light chesnut; under tail coverts, white. Legs and toes, green; all the plumage of the body with the webs disunited, having the appearance of hair.

The Rev. R. P. Alington has furnished the drawing from which the plate is taken.



COOT.

COOT.

COMMON COOT. BALD COOT.

Fulica atra,	PENNANT. MONTAGU.
" *aterrima,*	LINNÆUS.

Fulica—............? *Atra*—The feminine of *ater*—Black.

THE Coot is widely distributed throughout the continents of Europe, Asia, and Africa; occurring in Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Iceland, the Ferroe Islands, Russia, Spain, Italy, France, Switzerland, Holland, Germany, Siberia, Asia Minor, China, India, and the Islands of Japan and Sunda.

In Yorkshire the species is common in some parts and not so in others. It is nearly extinct about Huddersfield, rather rare near Sheffield, and occasionally seen near Leeds—at Killingbeck and Walton; but that this should be the case with the present, or any other bird in the manufacturing districts, is anything but to be wondered at. About Barnsley, Doncaster, and York, it is somewhat more plentiful; I have seen it on the Driffield stream. In Cambridgeshire they used to be plentiful in the fens between Ely and Littleport, and so they are still in Norfolk, in the large pieces of water called Broads, where several thousands have been seen at a time; also in Suffolk, Kent, Essex, Dorset, and Hants: in Cornwall they are not uncommon. They are said to have been plentiful on Southampton water, in Hampshire, and at the Isle of Sheppy, in Kent.

In Scotland, though a few remain during mild winters, it is, for the most part a summer visitant, as also in the Orkney Islands; Dr. Baikie and Mr. Heddle remark that this species is found in various parts of Orkney. It was common in Evie, and is still frequent in South Ronaldshay, in Sanday, in Papa

Westray, etc. It breeds and remains throughout the year.

In Ireland also it is a constant resident.

Its natural resorts are large and small lakes and ponds, and sluggish rivers, where reeds and rushes, the spontaneous growth of the alluvial soil, furnish umbrageous recesses suitable to its desire of privacy; but it also at times visits the low parts of the coast, especially during hard frosts, when the inland waters are frozen up.

It is, to a certain extent, migratory; many remain with us throughout the year, but still more come towards winter from the north, and of these also, the chief number seek the more southern parts of the island. The spring movement takes place in March and April, and the autumnal one in October and November. The birds proceed by night to or rather towards their destination, beginning to move about dusk, and halting by the break of day at any suitable place of repose and refreshment. The flocks preserve no special order in their flight, and their voices may be heard aloft in still weather, at such times indicative of the approaching change of weather.

They are shy, except in the breeding-season, and give instant notice, made use of at the same time by other birds in their neighbourhood, of the approach of any danger. They will live long in confinement, being easily tamed, if a sufficiency of water exists for their habits. Sir Thomas Browne wrote about two hundred years ago of these birds—'Upon the appearance of a Kite or Buzzard, I have seen them unite from all parts of the shore in great numbers, when, if the Kite stoops near them, they will fling up and spread such a flash of water with their wings, that they will endanger the Kite, and so keep him off again and again in open opposition.' Messrs. Shepherd and Whitear, in their 'Catalogue of Norfolk and Suffolk Birds,' observe that they practise this habit also to defend themselves or their young from the frequent attacks of large and predaceous Gulls. Coots are frequently to be seen in the markets for sale, but they are not considered good birds to eat. They have the same power that the Moor-Hen has of keeping the body sunk beneath the water, while only the bill is kept out to breathe, and even the very young birds not only dive, but practise this mode of hiding themselves when pursued.

The Coot dives with great quickness and ease, rising sometimes as much as a hundred yards from the spot where it had gone down. They are very powerful and strong on the wing, though they seem to dislike getting up, and are at times seen at a considerable height, and make extended migrations. In flight they carry the legs stretched out behind them. If alarmed to get up from the water, they scurry and flap along, the head and neck straight out, and their feet pattering upon the surface, and a large number together make a very considerable noise. They move about on dry land actively and well, and are said to be able to perch on trees, but prefer to keep, which they mostly do, on the other element.

'When the bird is by chance seen to walk on the ground,' says Meyer, 'its appearance is not very elegant, owing to the formation and backward position of the legs, and the attitude it necessarily requires to keeps its balance, which is by carrying its breast high, back arched, and tail lowered.' They are said to make use of their feet as weapons of defence, if attacked at close quarters. They roost at night either on a congeries of rushes in the middle of a piece of water, at a small distance from the land, or ascend some height or mount into a tree, which they do with ease and readiness.

They will readily feed on grass if other food be scarce; grain they devour with avidity. Small fish, aquatic insects, and water-plants form their ordinary supplies; and they also pick the buds, blossoms, and seeds of different plants, and corn, too, when seeking food at night on the land. In the early part of the year, when the plants that have their roots below the water have not as yet reached the surface, these birds, acting on the principle that 'if the mountain will not come to Mahomet, Mahomet must go to the mountain,' are in the habit of frequently diving to procure them, where they only then can be procured. They remain a considerable time under water in search of food.

The call is only a harsh wild 'crew,' or 'kew' uttered either singly or several times in succession. This is the similitude of it as given by Meyer; but it is rarely indeed that the note of any bird can be properly expressed in the syllabic form. The young keep up a constant noise, unless any one approach, when they instantly become still.

The nest, not unfrequently deferred to be made until May, is a large structure, and, though of rough workmanship, very strong in its composition, so as to keep the eggs dry, albeit in such close proximity to water. It is built by the edges of islands, in, or by the borders of lakes, ponds, and rivers, and is generally placed among and loosely attached to flags and reeds; sometimes on a tuft of rushes, and composed of the former plants: the finer portions are placed inwards. Mr. Hewitson says that they are sometimes accumulated so much as to rise from half a foot to a foot above the water, going down also to a depth of from one foot and a half to two feet; the width is about a foot and a half, and the interior nearly flat, just sufficiently hollowed to retain the eggs. Bewick mentions an instance where the nest of a Coot, built among some rushes in a lake at Belsay, the seat of Sir W. Middleton, in Northumberland, having been dislodged by the wind and driven about, the hen bird still continued to sit on the eggs, and hatched the young as if nothing had happened. Such instances occasionally occur, the nest being either built on a floating mass of sedge or rushes, or composed itself of moveable materials.

Since writing the above, I have observed one placed on the water, as indeed they not unfrequently are, and confined only in its place by the reeds springing up around it. It was only three or four yards from the edge of a small pond, adjoining the high-road between High Catton and Stamford Bridge. The old bird moved a little way from it as I stopped, but did not appear shy, as she doubtless would at another time.

Bishop Stanley writes thus on the subject of this part of the natural history of these birds:—'They, too, build a simple rushy nest, but with this difference, that instead of seeking to raise it above the water, they seem to prefer it floating upon the very surface, where, of course, it is exposed to the double danger of being carried hither and thither according as the wind blows; or if interwoven with reeds or rushes close to the water, of being covered, should the waters be raised by floods. But the Coot is probably aware of these possibilities, and accordingly guards against them, preventing the nests being carried away, by ingeniously fastening the materials of which they are made, to the rushes or osiers near them, but at the same time these fastenings are of such a nature as to allow of the nests rising with the water, so that no ordinary flood would expose them to the danger of immersion. The Coot, like the Water-Hen, covers her nest, and, if not so effectually, yet with a most extraordinary rapidity. We have repeatedly watched a Coot quietly sitting on her nest; if the boat approaches, she rises, and immediately begins pecking away right and left, which she continues to do until the enemy is so near that she is compelled to decamp for her own preservation. In this short time, however, she almost always contrives to cover her eggs; and though the nest itself remains a very conspicuous object, a careless observer might pass it as deserted and empty.' Quarrels arise among different birds sometimes at the spring of the year, for the choice of a situation.

The eggs are from six or seven, to ten or even fourteen in number, of a light dull yellowish, or greenish pale brown, or stone-colour, spotted with small rust-coloured spots. If the first hatch be taken or destroyed, a second is produced, but in less numbers.

The young almost immediately leave the nest to run about, and after a few days entirely forsake it, unless the weather is unseasonable, in which case they return to it at night for a week or two, the old birds carefully tending them as long as necessary. The hen covers them with her wings.

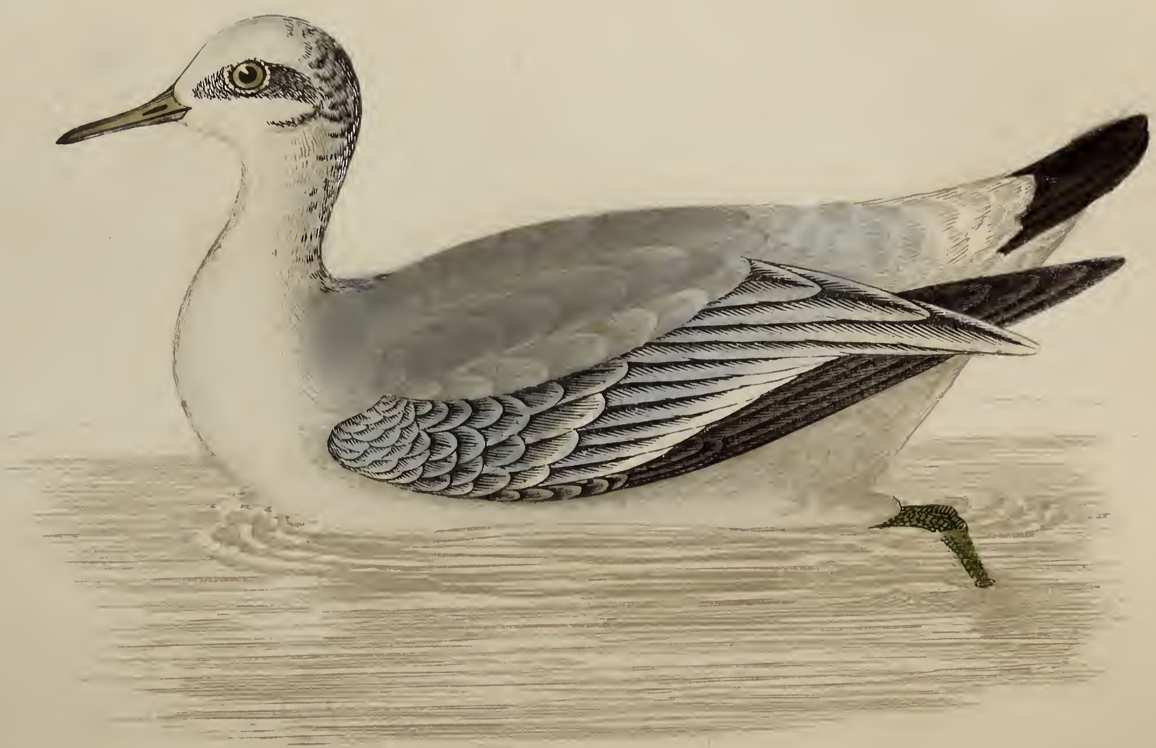
The plumage is well adapted to resist water. Male; weight, from a pound and a half to two pounds; length, one foot three or four inches, or more—up to one foot six—different individuals varying in size; bill, dull white, with a tinge of red in the spring; over its base is a white unfeathered patch, which contrasts beautifully with the sable hue of the rest of the plumage. Iris, red; surrounding the lower part of the eye is a small semicircular streak of white; head on the back part of the crown, neck, and nape, deep black, with a tinge of ash-coloured grey; chin, throat, and breast, deep ash grey tinged with bluish. Back, black, with a tinge of ash-coloured grey, the shafts darkest.

The wings have a white line on the bend; underneath they appear, in some lights, of a silvery grey colour; the shafts of the feathers are darker than the rest; greater and lesser wing coverts, black, with a tinge of ash grey; primaries, nearly black; secondaries, also black, tipped with white, making a narrow line across the wing. The legs, which are placed very far backwards, but appearing still more so than they really are from the way they are bent, have an orange band above the knee; below it, they and the toes are greyish ash-colour, with an olive green tinge about the joints of the former, and the edge of the lobed webs of the latter; they are very long, and the claws sharply hooked. Old birds become blacker in colour.

The female is like the male, but is slightly less in size.

The young, when first hatched, have the head reddish or orange reddish brown, and the rest of the down dingy black. When in full plumage, they are of a paler colour than the old ones, and the patch on the forehead is less in size.

A very curious variety of the Coot was shot, as the Rev. R. P. Alington informs me, at Misson, Nottinghamshire, near Bawtry, Yorkshire. It is all white, the legs also and the bill, the wings only being the usual colour. Other white varieties have occurred, and some partially white.



GREY PHALAROPE.

GREY PHALAROPE.

Phalaropus lobatus,	PENNANT. BEWICK.
" *hyperboreus,*	BEWICK.
" *platyrhynchus,*	GOULD.
Tringa lobata,	MONTAGU.

Phalaropus. *Phalara*—Fringes. *Pous*—A foot. *Lobatus*—With lobes to the feet.

THIS very neat bird occurs, during its migration, in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, as also in France, Italy, Switzerland, Holland, and Germany: it advances to Greenland. In America it is well known in the United States, where as here, it occurs in the spring and autumn, on its way to or from the Arctic regions. In Asia it is plentiful in Siberia, and among the lakes in the neighbourhood of the Caspian Sea.

The Grey Phalarope breeds in some of the Orkney Islands—in North Ronaldshay and Sanday; it was first observed there by Dr. Neill, in the year 1804, who obtained several specimens in Papa Westray; also further north in Iceland, as also occasionally in Norway and Sweden. In America it has been met with at Melville Island and the North Georgian Islands.

In Yorkshire it has occurred occasionally at Scarborough; one at Brignall; one at Rossington, near Doncaster, in the year 1836, in summer plumage; one near Barnsley, in 1835; one taken near York, and another caught by a party of poachers near Bolton-upon-Dearne. In Norfolk, one or two occur every autumn, in the months of October or November, and again in the spring as they retrace their way; eight or nine were obtained in the winter of 1828; one, out of a flock of four, on a mere near Wretham Hall, by the gamekeeper of W. Birch, Esq.; four near Salthouse, in September, 1847; one near

Norwich, the 9th. of November, 1853. In Gloucestershire, one at Mitcheldean, on a pond close to a farm-house, in January, 1847; it had been associating with the Ducks for some days before. In Cornwall, many were observed and procured in various ways and at different places, in the beginning of October, 1846, after a strong gale from the S.S.E. They were in a very poor and enfeebled condition.

In Devonshire one, October 12th., on the River Otter, near Honiton. In Lancashire, one of two which were seen about the same time, on the River Ribble; also two in Worcestershire, the same month, on the River Severn. In Wiltshire, one is mentioned by Montagu as having been killed at Alderton. In Northumberland, one at the Fern Islands, in the autumn of 1820. In Sussex, on Shoreham sands a few have been met with, feeding in company with some Oyster-catchers, by Mr. Thomas Thorncroft, of Brighton. In Kent, one was shot swimming on the Thames, at Swanscombe, in the autumn of 1845, so Mr. M. C. Cooke informs me; Yarrell mentions another shot while swimming on the Thames, near Battersea, in November, 1824; and Meyer two other on the same river—one near Shepperton, in December, 1840, and another December 2nd., 1841.

A few occurred in Lincolnshire in the winter of 1854, the Rev. R. P. Alington relates; one of them was obtained by H. Allenby, Esq., on the 15th. of November, in the parish of Thorsby. In Surrey a few have been met with near Godalming and Guildford; one at the former place November 30th., 1846; about the same time six more were shot near Woking; three near Bagshot, one of them the 25th. of September, 1845; one near Carshalton, the middle of November, 1851. In Oxfordshire, one some years ago, and five others were seen near Chipping Norton, and three of them obtained, one of them a male, and another a young bird, apparently of the year, in the winter of 1846-7. One near Oxford, in the winter of 1852, of which the Hon. T. L. Powys has written me word. In Cambridgeshire, three in the hard winter of 1819-20. In Berkshire, one at Shinfield, in March, 1794.

In Ireland, four specimens have been procured in different years, all in the autumn. Mr. Thompson has described it as a rare but occasional autumnal visitant.

In Scotland, likewise, others, as on the banks of the Solway, and from the Frith of Forth. One at Fraserburgh, in Aberdeenshire, the 27th. of October, 1853.

It is a migratory species, moving southwards for the winter, and retiring to the north in the spring.

These birds are much addicted to swimming, and have been observed by Sir Edward Parry, to adopt that mode of removal from the approach of danger, in preference to flying away. In their native haunts, far away from common interruption, they are exceedingly tame; and this feature in their character continues to manifest itself in those individuals that occur here, who have not been taught by harsh experience to become wary of too frequent danger. They exhibit a very graceful appearance on the water, and nod the head constantly in their movements. They are said by Audubon to be excellent eating.

They fly fast and well, and run nimbly on the shore.

The species feeds on small crustacea and water-insects, gnats and their larvæ.

The note is likened by Meyer to the word 'pick, pick,' uttered quickly and in a high tone.

The nest of this bird is described as slight, lined with a few grasses, or a mere formation of the natural herbage around, and placed in a hollow on some elevated spot in marshy places, but always in the vicinity of water, either the sea or some inland lake or river.

The eggs are usually four in number, of a stone-colour, with a tinge of olive, and spots and specks of dark brown. The old birds shew great fondness for their young, and remain with them till they are well able to fly.

The under plumage is thick and close-set. Male; weight, one ounce and a quarter, to one and three quarters, according to the condition the bird is in at the time; length, eight inches and a quarter; bill, yellow at the base, black at the tip, in winter blackish brown; it is flattened near the point; between it and the eye is a white streak; iris, dark chesnut brown, the eye is surrounded by white; above and behind it is a broad streak of pale dull yellow. Head on the sides, white on the upper part, and below reddish brown, with a tinge of orange going down the sides of the neck; crown, back of the neck, and nape, dusky olive brown, with, in summer, broad rufous orange or yellowish edgings to the feathers. In winter the forehead, crown, with a patch of greyish black, sides of the head, front and sides of the neck, are white; chin and throat, pale dusky greyish black, in winter white; breast, reddish orange brown, in winter white, with a patch of fine grey under the shoulder of the wing fading into the white; on the sides are a few pale dusky grey shaft streaks. Back, deep dusky brownish black, with broad dull yellowish margins to the feathers; in winter bluish grey, the shafts of the feathers darker and each narrowly edged with pale yellowish white.

The wings expand to the width of one foot three inches; greater wing coverts, dark lead-colour, in winter greyish black, broadly edged with white; lesser wing coverts, lead-colour; in winter greyish black, more narrowly edged with white; primaries, greyish black, the shafts white; secondaries, broadly tipped with white, exhibiting a conspicuous bar across the wing; tertiaries, long and black, in winter broadly edged with white on the outer webs. Tail, greyish black, finely margined with white, it is of a wedge-shaped form; under tail coverts, reddish brown. The legs, which have the bones flattened as in the true swimming birds, are greenish yellow, dull in winter; so are the toes, the front ones are united as far as the first joint. Claws, black; lobes, dusky and yellowish, serrated on the margins.

The female is larger than the male; length, about eight inches and a quarter, or a little over; bill, yellow, dark brown towards the point, in winter black; iris, dark brown; around the eye is a patch of white, in winter dusky black. Head on the crown, and about the base of the bill, white, in the winter there is a black patch at the back; neck, in front and on the sides, reddish chesnut, in winter grey in front; in winter the back is grey; breast, reddish chesnut, in winter white, with a small patch of grey on either side towards the front and middle; back, nearly black, with pale yellowish margins to the feathers, in winter grey.

Greater wing coverts, leaden grey, with broad ends of white, in winter edged with white; lesser wing coverts, leaden grey, with white edges; primaries, nearly black; secondaries, in winter, margined with white; tertiaries, leaden grey, with orange yellow margins, in winter these edges become white. Tail, nearly black, underneath it is ash grey; legs and toes, yellow, in winter yellowish brown. Claws, black; lobes, yellow, in winter yellowish brown.

In the young the feathers about the base of the bill are dull yellow, as also are the sides of the head and upper part of the breast; the back, tertiaries, and upper tail coverts, dusky, the feathers with pale buff edges. The legs, grey; the webs of the feet bordered with buff yellow.

In the intermediate stages of plumage between that of the summer and that assumed in the winter, this bird, always pretty, is then particularly so—the red and grey liveries more or less predominating. There are divers varieties partaking more or less of the character of the one or the other, according to the season; 'quæ nunc præscribere longum.'

RED-NECKED PHALAROPE.

RED-NECKED COOT-FOOT. RED-NECKED LOBE-FOOT.

Phalaropus hyperboreus,	PENNANT.
" *fulicaria,*	MONTAGU.
Lobipes hyperboreus,	FLEMING.
" *hyperborea,*	SELBY.

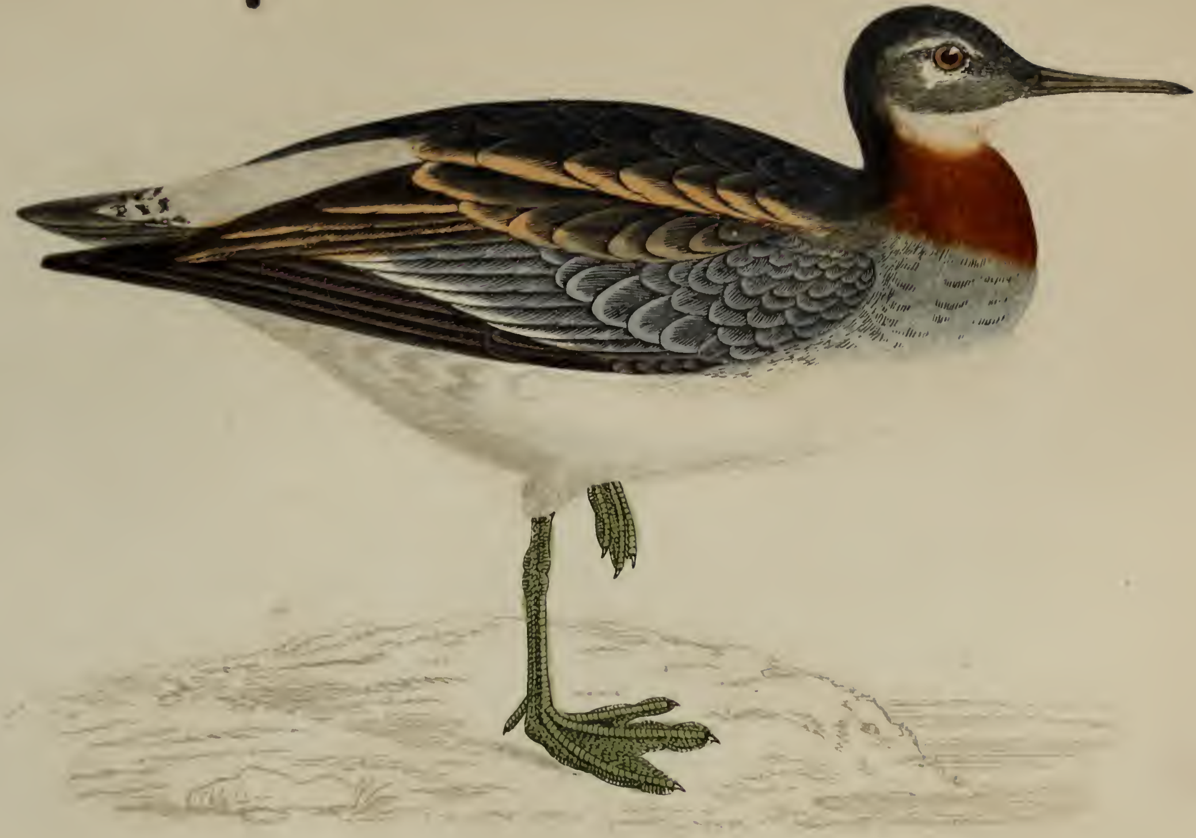
Phalaropus. *Phalara*—Fringes. *Pous*—A foot. *Hyperboreus*—Northern.

THIS kindred species is even yet more elegant than the preceding one.

On the continent of Europe it occurs in France, Holland, Germany, Italy, and Switzerland, Sweden and Norway, and thence visits Russia, Lapland, the Ferroe Islands, Greenland, and Iceland. In Asia it is assigned to Siberia, and the borders of the Caspian Sea. In America it is stated to be well known in the United States, but as least numerously met with in their southern districts. Captain Sabine mentions his finding them at the North Georgian Islands. It advances northwards to the Arctic Regions.

The earliest recorded occurrence of this bird as a British one, was in the island of Stronsay, one of the Orkneys, in the year 1769, as mentioned by Pennant.

In 1803, eight others, six females and two males, were found in Sanday and North Ronaldshay. They are said to be more rare there than formerly. In Lincolnshire one was taken near Louth, by the Rev. William Marsden, during the winter of 1849-50; one also near that place the beginning of November, 1849, as the Rev. R. P. Alington wrote me word. In Surrey, it is said by Mr. Mansell to have occurred near Godalming. In Oxfordshire, one was found in an exhausted state on Shotover Hill, in the winter of 1834.



RED-NECKED PHALAROPE.

In Norfolk one or two occur annually in the autumn, and so also on their return in the spring. One near Yarmouth, at the mouth of the river, on the 4th. of November, 1854, Mr. James Hunt has written me word of. One in the parish of Weybourn; four near Salthouse, in the autumn of 1846. In the county of Northumberland this bird has been obtained—one near Alnwick. In Yorkshire, one was procured at Wilberfoss, near York, on the 2nd. of June, 1854; it was in full summer dress, and was swimming at the time on a pond near a house in company with some ducks; one near Redcar, November 22nd., 1851: one near Scarborough, in December, 1853. This species occasionally is met with near Burlington, along the coast, in the winter. In Suffolk, two at Benacre, on the 23rd., and one on the 24th. of September, 1853. In Sussex, one was killed on a pond near Lewes, in November, 1849; one, a male, near Old Shoreham, about the second week in September, 1845; and another, a female, near Falmer, on the 20th. of May, 1846; one at Rottingdean, the 4th. of October, 1853, it was at the time swimming on a pond in the middle of the village in company with some ducks. Rennie also mentions his having seen one on the coast.

It breeds, but locally, in the Orkney Islands, Sanday, Westray, '*O*rcades ambo,' as also in North Ronaldshay, Sandwick, in Pomona, and others. Mr. C. St. John has also found them, evidently engaged with nests, in the month of June, in Sutherlandshire, near Loch Naver.

Their proper haunts are the sea-coast, and the skirts of any islands or lakes in the immediate neighbourhood.

They migrate on the approach of autumn to more southerly districts.

They are exceedingly tame, and allow of a very close advance. In the winter they assemble in large flocks in the countries where they are more at home. 'On the approach of danger, the old bird runs among the herbage, spreading her wings, and counterfeiting lameness, for the purpose of deluding the intruder; and, after leading the enemy from her young, she takes wing and flies to a great height, at the same time displaying a peculiar action of the wings; then descending with great velocity, and making, simultaneously, a noise with her wings. On her return to her young she uses a particular cry, for the purpose of gathering them together. As soon as she has collected them, she covers them with her wings, like the domestic hen.' M. Faber states that he has seen one of these birds swimming about in pursuit of insects on the surface of one of the boiling springs, which was so hot that he could not bear his hand in it. In the spring of the year the male birds have contests among themselves. Both parents exhibit much attachment to their young, and also to each other.

They swim with the greatest buoyancy and ease, and then present a most graceful appearance, the head drawn backwards over the shoulders. They run on the land in an equally pleasing manner, and are quick and able in flight. They have, at different times, been observed on the open sea many miles from shore. Captain James Ross mentions the occurrence of a small flock of these birds at a distance of sixty miles from the nearest land.

Their food is composed of small crustacea, worms, sea insects, and small gnats and flies.

These birds are late in laying, only one or two eggs having been found laid by nearly the middle of June. It appears that the male birds assist the females in the task of incubation.

The nest is placed in a hollow on a small hillock, or in a tuft of grass by the edge of the water, and is deep in shape—the material dry grass. Both birds are much attached to each other, as well as to their offspring. Several nests are frequently placed in the same neighbourhood.

The eggs appear to be four in number, and of a dull olive green colour, a good deal blotted with black brown or dusky. The young leave the nest soon after being hatched.

Male; length, about eight inches; bill, black; about its base the feathers are of a lead-colour, of which, a streak goes backwards behind the eye; iris, dark brown. Crown, neck, on the back and nape, dark lead or slate-colour; in winter the forehead is white, tinged with grey; the streak over the eye, the crown, and the nape, are blackish grey; the neck on the sides is fine yellowish red, which in winter wears away into white, with sometimes a tinge of purple; in front dark grey with a white edging; chin, white; throat, fine yellowish red, in winter white, with a slight tinge of pink. Breast, white, with some streaks below on the sides, of pale ash-colour, and in winter with a faint blush of purple red; back, dark or blackish lead-colour, the feathers with a margin of ash grey and brownish yellow.

The wings expand to the width of about one foot two inches; greater wing coverts. dark lead-colour, tipped with white, forming a distinct bar across the wing in winter; lesser wing coverts, dark lead-colour; primaries, nearly black, or black in winter; secondaries, the same, but not so dark, and with white tips; tertiaries, margined with reddish yellow on the outer web, which in the winter plumage is white; tail, brownish grey, margined with white, the two middle feathers the darkest—nearly black; under tail coverts, white. Legs and toes, dusky greenish grey; claws, black; lobes, dusky greenish, those on the front joint of the toes extend a little beyond the tip of the claw.

The female is larger than the male, and of similar plumage. Mr. Dunn says that her plumage is more brightly coloured than that of the male, the contrary having been asserted by others. Length, about seven inches.

The young, the first year, resemble the male in its winter plumage, the head on the top of the crown, black; the chin, throat, and breast, white; the back, black, with yellowish brown edges to the feathers.

GREY-LAG GOOSE.

WILD-GOOSE. GREY-LAG WILD-GOOSE.

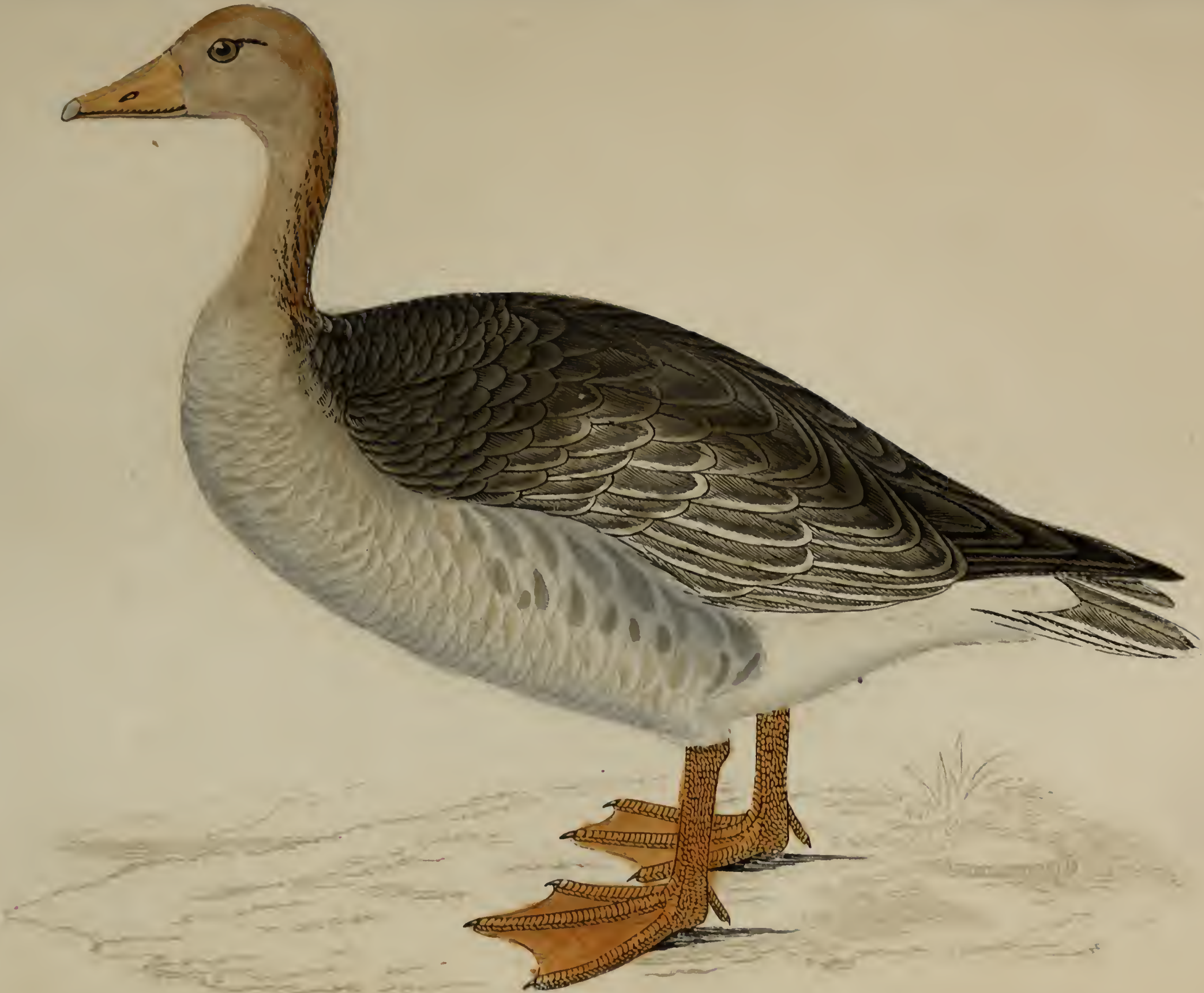
Anser palustris,	FLEMING. SELBY.
" *ferus,*	JENYNS.
Anas anser,	PENNANT.
" *ferus,*	MONTAGU.

Anser—A Goose. *Palustris*—Belonging to marshes.

THE good old-fashioned name of the Grey-lag Goose, shall not by me be set aside for that which more commends itself to modern 'ears polite.' One who is not ashamed of, but feels it a pride to bear the time-honoured title of Parson, the denomination, in the ancient dialect of the country, of the Person, the principal person of the parish by virtue of his office, must extend, as far as he has it in his power, the protection of print over the vernacular name of the bird of the grey lag, whose grey wing has so long been celebrated in the old poem, which will still last when many a modern one shall have been consigned to oblivion. Since writing the above, I perceive that Sir William Jardine has expressed a similar preference on a like ground.

The Grey-lag Goose breeds in the southern parts of Norway and Sweden, and visits Iceland. It occurs also, but not commonly, in France, Switzerland, and Holland, and is said to be more plentiful in Germany, in Prussia, Pomerania, Saxony, and Silesia.

In Asia, it is reported to be found in Persia, China, and Japan, and along the southern shores of the Caspian Sea, and the Dead Sea. In Africa also it is seen in the northern and north-western parts.



GREY-LAG GOOSE.

In Yorkshire, one was killed near Doncaster, in the spring of 1843, and others are said by Mr. Allis, to have been known at Walton Hall, and near Barnsley, York, and Sheffield.

It occurs, but not very commonly, in Lincolnshire; so the Rev. R. P. Alington tells me. In Norfolk it is said to have occurred formerly, and to do so still, though rarely. This at least is the account given by Messrs. John Henry Gurney and William Richard Fisher, but Messrs. C. J. and James Paget say that it is very common. The former statement, I incline to think, is the correct one; one was shot at Breydon Water, near Yarmouth, in April, 1849. Specimens have been, and are obtained, from time to time, in Northumberland, Durham, Norfolk, Cambridgeshire, Devonshire, and Cornwall, near Falmouth, but only occasionally, in the spring and autumn, according to W. P. Cocks, Esq.

In Ireland, one was obtained in Queen's County, in the month of February, 1848. It is but rarely now obtained in that island, though considered to have been formerly more abundant.

In Scotland, as related by Mr. St. John, some still breed in Sutherlandshire, on Loch Maddie, Loch Laigal, Loch Urigil, and other waters. In the Orkney Islands these Wild-Geese occur every winter, but not in great numbers. They leave in the spring, none having ever been known to stay to breed.

This species is considered to be the origin of the tame birds, and if it be so, as appears to be the case, its diminution in numbers, without apparent cause, contemporaneously with the increase of the domesticated birds, and their entire establishment, is certainly a very curious fact, and one which may well direct the mind to the over-ruling and all-wise Providence of God. Where, in like manner, is the parent-stock of the dog, the camel, or the horse now to be found?

The localities it inhabits are the borders of lakes, large ponds, inland seas fringed with flags and rushes, desolate fens, and unfrequented swamps, and the sea-shore in cold weather. Meyer writes, 'By nature the present species is very shy, and can only be approached by a sportsman by stealth, whereas either a shepherd, ploughman, woman, or child, is very little heeded.

This bird appears sociable among its own species, as a solitary one is hardly ever met with; but it does not easily mix in company with other Geese, and least of all with the Bean Goose. On the wing it is strong, but heavy, although it moves on at a considerable rate in proportion to its bulk. When the bird flies to a short distance only, it does not mount above thirty or forty yards from the ground, but when migrating, or leaving the neighbourhood, it flies at a great height, and when in companies they proceed in a manner well known to all observers, being headed by one individual, and forming the letter <. It is remarkable that when a pair of Wild-Geese, during the breeding-season, fly to or from their feeding-ground, the female generally flies before the male.' They also proceed at times in a straight line, nearly abreast, the post of leader being relieved from time to time, the foremost then retiring to the rear.

In a letter to me from the Rev. D. Knight, of Earl's Barton, near Northampton, dated February 22nd., 1853, he writes, 'Tradition says, that Mr. Richard Cradock, a miller, who died in 1784, shot twenty-seven Wild-Geese and a sheep at one shot; another account says nineteen geese; another twelve; but all agree in adding the sheep. The granddaughter now lives at the mill near which the redoubtable shot took place; she also says that the number was nineteen, and an aged yeoman, who gave the highest number, says that he has often heard his father speak of it, and that, at the same time, Mr. Cradock blew a foot off the gun which he used. The gun still hangs up at the mill; it measures seven feet nine inches, and weighs somewhere towards twenty pounds.'

It is universally believed that the Goose lives to a great age, and particular instances are recorded by ornithologists which confirm the fact; some are mentioned which have been kept seventy years; and Willughby notices one which lived eighty years. In the 'Morning Chronicle' of April 16th., 1835, there is published a biography of 'Tom the Gander,' that had lived thirty-seven years, nine months, and six days. The following anecdotes will be found interesting:

'Thus much,' says Bishop Stanley, 'for the attention due to the Goose for its pecuniary worth; but beyond this, it has qualities, we might almost say, of the mind, of a very singular character; we mean the unaccountable constancy and affection which it has been known to shew, not only to its own species and to other birds and animals, but more particularly to man; and it is not improbable that these qualities, which, as we shall soon shew, were known to the ancients, might have rendered it an object of high esteem, and in some cases sacred; as for instance, it was to Juno, the queen of their idol gods.

In addition to which it has other qualifications, proving the fallacy of the proverbial libel, 'As silly as a Goose.' Thus its watchfulness at night-time has always been noted; and it certainly is endowed with a strong organ of self-preservation, for, as it has been well observed, you may drive over cat, dog, hen, pig, or even pigeon, but few, if any, can record an instance of driving over a Tame Goose; and as for Wild-Geese, there is no animal, biped or quadruped, so difficult to deceive or approach, their sense of hearing, seeing, and smelling being so exceedingly acute; independent of which they seem to act in so organized and cautious a manner when feeding or roosting, as to defy all danger. Sportsmen could give instances without number of their utmost skill being of no avail in attempting to approach these birds; either a careless step on a piece of gravel, or an eddy of wind, however light, or letting them perceive the smallest portion of their persons, has rendered useless whole hours of manœuvring.

Of its attachment to the human race, Pliny, an ancient Roman writer, gives several instances; one only we select, as closely resembling that with which we shall conclude. A person named Lacydes, a philosopher, had a Goose, which took so strong a fancy to him that it would never willingly leave him, by day or night. Wherever he went the Goose was his companion; if he went abroad and walked in the public streets, the bird followed him; and in his own house, always forced itself into his presence. The philosopher, struck with this constant and strange attachment, seems to have considered it as in some way connected with religious feelings; and accordingly, when at last it died, he was at the expense of bestowing upon it a magnificent funeral.

Our next instance occurred in Scotland. A Goose, a year old, formed a similar attachment to a person in Elgin, and would follow him any distance, even through the crowd and bustle of the main street. One day, when going down this street, its master went into a hair-dresser's shop to be shaved, whereupon the bird waited patiently till the operation was finished, and then accompanied him to the house of a friend; after which it proceeded home with him. Change of dress seemed to make no difference in the bird's power of distinguishing its master, for in whatever dress he appeared, the Goose recognised him; and whenever he spoke it responded by a cry expressive of satisfaction.

Another similar case is on record in Germany. An aged blind woman, who probably might have been in the habit of feeding it, used to be led every Sunday to church by a Gander taking hold of her gown with his bill. When she had seated herself, it retired to graze in the churchyard till she came out again, when it led her home. One day, the clergyman called at her house, and expressing his surprise to her daughter that her mother should venture abroad; she replied, 'Oh, sir! we are not afraid of trusting her out of sight, for the Gander is with her''

The Bishop continues, 'We frankly own that so strange and improbable do the above stories appear, that we should neither have inserted nor paid the slightest attention to them, had we not the following testimony to their credibility, for the accuracy of which we can readily vouch; and deeply do we regret that a better fate did not await so extraordinary a bird, which under more intelligent observers might have afforded opportunities of ascertaining the extent of so unusual a development of affection.

A farmer in Cheshire possessed a flock of Geese, one of which, at the end of about three years, without any apparent cause, began to shew a peculiar partiality for its master. It first appeared on the bird's quitting its companions in the barn-yard or pond, and stalking after him. These symptoms became daily stronger, and in a short time wherever the farmer went, whether to the mill, or the blacksmith's shop, or through the bustling streets of a neighbouring manufacturing town, the Goose was at his heels. So perseveringly did it follow his steps that if he wished to go out alone, he was under the necessity of fastening up the bird.

The farmer was in the habit of holding his own plough, and on these occasions, the Goose as regularly passed the day in the ploughing field, walking sedately, not with the usual waddling pace of its fellow-geese, but with a firm step, head elevated, and neck erect, a short way before him in the line of the furrows, frequently turning round and fixing its eyes intently upon him. When the length of one furrow was accomplished, and the plough turned, the Goose, without losing its step, adroitly wheeled about, and thus continued its attendance till the evening, and then followed its master home; and, if permitted, would mount upon his lap as he sat by the fire after dark, shewing the strongest signs of affection, and nestling its head in his bosom, and preening the hair of his head with its beak, as it was wont to do its own feathers. Sometimes the farmer would go out shooting, and no sooner had he shouldered his gun, than his companion was at its post, following him as before, in spite of every obstacle, 'getting over,' to use the man's own words, 'the fences as well as I could myself.' All this, it should be observed, continued not only without any encouragement on the part of the farmer, but even in spite of every discouragement on his part. How long it would have continued, or to what extent, we lament to add, he effectually precluded the world from knowing; for with an unpardonable inattention to so truly a wonderful case, in addition to an equally unpardonable superstitious fear, he took it into his head that the mysterious affection of the Goose foreboded some evil; and in a moment of alarm, he killed the faithful bird.

We can quote another, shewing that a Goose is occasionally possessed of a keen sense, enabling her to detect imposition, and distinguish her own eggs from others closely resembling them. A Goose belonging to a clergyman in Cheshire, was set, as it is termed, on six or eight eggs; the dairymaid thinking these too few for so large a bird to cover, added an equal number of duck's eggs; the next morning she went as usual to see if all was right, when, to her great surprise, she found the Goose quiet on her nest, but every one of the duck's eggs picked out and lying on the ground. Her mistress directed her to replace them, which was accordingly done, but the next morning, on going again to examine the nest, she found all the duck's eggs as before, moved off, and lying round about the nest, the Goose's eggs remaining under the sitting bird in perfect order. How long she would have persevered in removing them is not known, as, for fear of driving the Goose from her nest, the experiment was not repeated.

When once attached to each other they appear to be very constant; in proof of which, a person having marked five separate Ganders, and five separate Geese with which they had paired, found that for three successive years when he attended to them, each regularly selected his companion of the former year, and continued faithful to her. Why the Goose has been so generally pointed out, proverbially, as the most foolish of birds, it is difficult to say, for the foregoing, as well as the following instances, would lead us to believe that they are endowed with a larger, rather than a less portion of sense than other birds.

An old Goose, which had been a fortnight hatching in a farmer's kitchen, was perceived on a sudden to be taken violently ill; she soon after left the nest and repaired to an outhouse where there was a young Goose of the first year, which she brought with her into the kitchen. The young one immediately scrambled into the old one's nest, sat, hatched, and afterwards brought up the brood. The old Goose, as soon as the young one had taken her place, sat down by the side of the nest and shortly after died. As the young Goose had never been in the habit of entering the kitchen before, the fact can only be accounted for by supposing that the old one had some way of communicating her thoughts and anxieties, which the young one was perfectly able to understand. We give this anecdote on the authority of Mr. Bun, who states it to have occurred at Ennis, in July, 1828.

So strong are the affections of these loving birds, that some who have exposed themselves in their vengeance, have occasionally found themselves fearfully worsted. A game cock, near Ashford, in Kent, priding himself no doubt on his prowess, happened a short time ago, to take offence at a Goose during the time of incubation, and attacking her with great fury, pecked out one of her eyes, and destroyed several of her eggs. An old Gander, seeing the danger to which his mate was exposed, flew to her assistance, and many desperate battles took place; one day in his absence the cock renewed his attack upon the Goose, when the Gander, hearing the bustle, hurried up and seizing the cock, dragged him into the pond, where he ducked him repeatedly, and finally drowned him.

Another somewhat similar instance occurred at Astbury, near Congleton, in Cheshire. Several Geese were feeding near a barn where some men were thrashing, and a Sparrow near them, when a Hawk suddenly pounced upon the latter, and would have inevitably carried it off had not the Gander flown to its rescue, and with its beak struck the Hawk so violent a blow that it was stunned, and taken up by one of the thrashers. The Goose is, in truth, by no means a cowardly bird, and will often, when excited, defend himself very courageously.

Under particular circumstance a Wild-Goose has indeed been known to throw itself under the protection of man. Thus an officer settled on a farm near the Missouri, in North America, one day observed a large Eagle frequently darting towards the river, and then rising again. On a near approach, he perceived that its object was to take a Wild-Goose, which had alighted on the water, and which was dipping to avoid so powerful an enemy. Its efforts, however, appeared to be in vain, and after diving again and again, and as often rising to get breath, it became nearly exhausted; when suddenly turning, it made for the shore with all speed towards the officer's house, where two men were at work, and, as soon as it had landed, walked leisurely up to them, permitting itself to be taken without attempting to escape. It was completely exhausted, but soon recovered, and within three days seemed quite contented and confident of protection."

In the spring of the year the young males have frequent contests, holding one another by the neck and beating with their wings till one is obliged to yield; the females are spectators, but not silent ones, keeping up a constant cackling, expressive of encouragement, to continue the fight, or exhortative to peace. Wild-Geese are good to eat when fed on the land. They are very shy and vigilant birds, and can only be approached on open ground by stalking, and that of the most careful kind. Sentinels are always on the look-out, to give immediate notice of the approach of danger, and on the slightest alarm the whole flock takes wing. They usually retire at night to the water, but watch is still kept by sentries who take their turns in the office.

They feed on grasses of various kinds, the young blades of corn, water-plants, clover, and other herbage, as also seeds, grain, barley, it is said, and oats, especially, and often do considerable damage among the young crops.

The voice, a clangulous call, is the echo of the harsh cry of the common species. It is very frequently uttered, especially when the bird is flying, or if a companion be met with.

The nest of this Goose is made of grass, rushes, leaves, or dry stalks of plants, under cover of some rushes or osiers, and is well lined with feathers. It is large in size, and is located in a marsh, or by the border of a lake or inland sea. The male keeps guard near it while his partner sits.

The eggs are said to be commonly four or five in number, but to amount also to as many as twelve or fourteen, the former the produce of younger, and the latter of older birds; eight or nine the intermediate quantity. They are of a dull yellowish white, smooth and shining in appearance.

Meyer says, 'The female is very careful in covering the eggs with some of the surrounding materials, whenever she leaves the nest for a short time; and it may serve as a safe guide to persons who go in search of the eggs, that if they are uncovered, they are forsaken, and are, consequently, not worth leaving in the nest. As soon as the Goose has laid her full number of eggs, she plucks the down off her breast, and disposes it in such a manner among the eggs, that they retain an equal temperature even at the changes of the weather, or during the short periods when she leaves the nest, once or twice a day.'

'In four weeks the young come forth, and after remaining under the mother the entire first day, are subsequently led to the water, and made to swim to some small islet, where they can hide, and feed on the young blades of corn, grass, and duckweed. The gander redoubles his watchfulness on the increase of his family, and hardly ever leaves the party. On the approach of danger, the parents resort immediately to the shelter of rushes, standing corn, or long grass, attended by the whole brood; but when surprised on open ground, too far from shelter, the young lay themselves flat on the ground in some rut or hollow, and have even been known to be taken up in the hand, and carried away; but if they are near enough to the water, instinct teaches them to resort to that element for protection, where, by diving or swimming to the shelter of some cover, they may elude observation: on such occasions the parents fly round the intruders, uttering their inharmonious cries.' Yarrell says that when the hen birds begin to sit, the males leave the fens, and collect in flocks near or on the sea. The male and female are considered to unite for life. They return yearly to the same breeding places, arriving at them in March.

A wild Grey-lag gander is recorded to have paired with a tame goose in a farm-yard.

Male; weight, eight or nine pounds; length, two feet eleven inches; bill, large, pale yellowish red with a tint of orange; the tooth at the end greyish white. Iris, greyish brown; the eyelids pale yellowish red with a tinge of orange. Head, crown, neck on the back, and nape, greyish brown, the feathers of the latter disposed in rows or lines, forming a sort of furrows; neck in front, pale greyish white brown; chin, throat, and breast on the upper part, pale greyish brown; the last-named below, white, and barred on the sides with grey and greyish white. Back on the upper part, greyish brown and barred across, the feathers deeply edged with a paler shade; on the lower part light bluish grey.

The wings have the second quill feather the longest; they reach, when closed, not quite to the end of the tail; there is a hard protuberance at the inner end of the wing. Greater wing coverts, greyish brown; lesser wing coverts, darker leaden greyish brown—both bordered with whitish; of the primaries, the three outer ones are pale grey, the others dark leaden grey; the shafts of all are white, the base greyish white, the ends more or less black; tertiaries, leaden grey, broadly margined with a lighter shade; greater and lesser under wing coverts, white. Tail, leaden grey, the tip white, the outer feathers almost entirely white; upper and under tail coverts, white. Legs and toes, pale greyish yellowish red; claws, black.

The female is smaller than the male, and her plumage is less distinctly marked. Length, two feet six inches.

The young are described as being darker than the old birds.

Pied varieties have occurred—one with the wing perfectly white; another with white feathers along the breast and wing coverts. In the specimen already alluded to as having been shot near Yarmouth, the lower part of the breast is described by Mr. Fisher, as having had, in some degree, the black markings, a feature in the plumage of the White-fronted Goose.

BEAN GOOSE.

WILD GOOSE.

Anser ferus,	FLEMING. SELBY.
“ *segetum,*	JENYNS. GOULD.
“ *sylvestris,*	BRISSON.
Anas segetum,	PENNANT. MONTAGU.

Anser—A Goose.

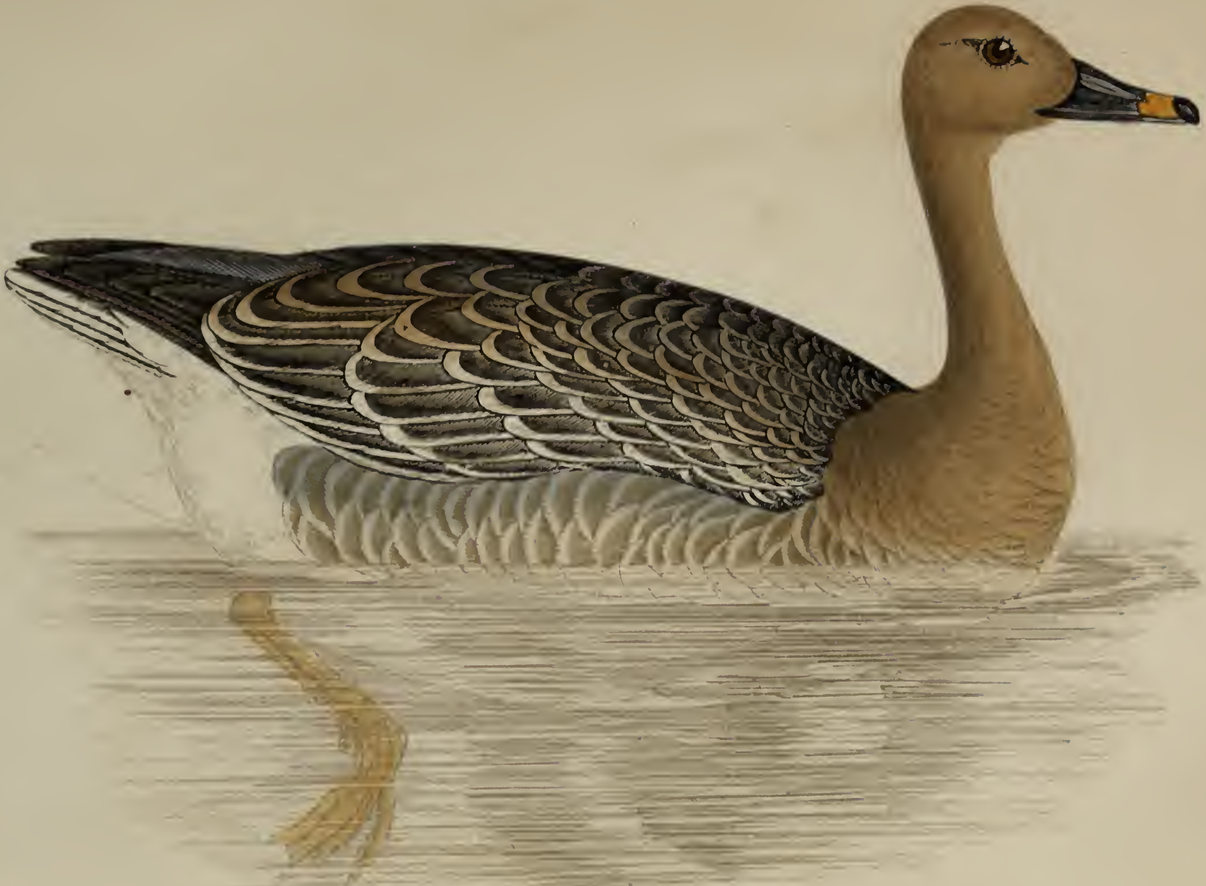
Ferus—Wild—savage.

THE Bean Goose is plentiful in Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Lapland, where, as in the Ferroe Islands, Iceland, Greenland, Nova Zembla, and still higher northern latitudes, it rears its young; it is found abundantly also in France, Germany, and Holland, Spain and Italy: in the former countries it breeds. In Asia, too, in the northern districts.

Its dwelling-places are the borders of inland seas and lakes, rivers and ponds, swamps and ditches, stubble fields and others. In the latter they feed in the day-time, and towards evening repair to the open sands, where they roost during the night after bathing and drinking.

In Yorkshire, these birds frequent the Wolds in immense flocks, and seem to prefer those higher grounds to others that are lower and more marshy. They have been met with also in other places, as at Sheffield, York, and Killingbeck, near Leeds. In Gloucestershire and Worcestershire, this species also occurs by the River Severn. In Northamptonshire it is a common visitor, as I am informed by the Hon. T. L. Powys; so it also used to be in Cambridgeshire, in the fens, when fens still existed, as recorded by the Rev. Leonard Jenyns. In Norfolk, the species is pretty abundant in autumn, winter, and spring: it also occurs in Lincolnshire.

In Scotland, it breeds in Sutherlandshire, on Loch Shin, Loch Naver, Loch Laigal, and several other of the lakes; as



BEAN GOOSE.

also in the Hebrides, in the Islands of Harris and Lewis; and no doubt in many other parts. A few are said to have nests every year about Tunbiggin Tarn, near Orton, in Westmoreland; others in Cumberland.

The species is also common in Wales and in Ireland, as a winter visitant. In Orkney, it has been observed occasionally during the early part of the winter, but its visits are very uncertain.

In September and October they wend their way southwards.

The Bean Goose has been kept on the ornamental water in St. James' Park, London, and has hatched its young there. It is very readily tamed if the eggs are procured, and young birds thus obtained for early domestication. The like indeed is the case with older birds. One was obtained by Mr. George Johnson, of Melton Ross, Lincolnshire, in 1851, of which, though an old bird and procured with the gun, he wrote me word, 'he is at this time so tame that he will eat out of my hand, and come any time at call, and is in every way more domesticated than our common Geese.'

They are naturally very shy and watchful, so as only to be approachable by stratagem. The well-known saying, 'A Wild Goose chase,' like most or all proverbial expressions, conveys the result of wide-spread experience. These birds are friendly and sociable among themselves. In the tame state they soon come to associate and consort with the common Geese: they are said to attain a great age.

These Wild Geese, when there are only a few together, fly in a straight line one after the other, but when numbers increase its length, it diverges into two in the form of a wedge, some old Gander, the patriarch of the flock, leading the van. When on their migration they keep aloft, but at other times nearer to the ground, especially if the wind be high, or the weather thick and misty. They fly, as has been ascertained, at the rate of from forty to fifty miles an hour.

They arrive at their feeding grounds with great regularity, at the early dawn of the morning, and remain till towards dusk in the evening, when, as before mentioned, they wing their way in long strings to the sea, or the sand banks of estuaries and rivers, their loud gabble calling attention to them overhead as they go. In such places, out of the reach of danger, they rest in security. They do much mischief in clover fields, which crop they seem very much addicted to.

Arthur Strickland, Esq. has written of his having known some years ago, in one parish on the Wolds, a person hired to keep them off. They feed also on young growing corn, to which they do like damage, as also on turnips and grass, and subsequently pick up a livelihood in the stubble fields. Their partiality to beans, the newly sown fields of which, and those of peas, they frequent in the early spring, is probably the origin of their name. They are, however, fond of any other kind of grain, oats, rye, and wheat, ripe or unripe, and also pluck the different grasses.

The eggs of this species are of a dull white colour, and from five to seven in number.

The young, till able to fly, hide themselves, if alarmed, in the neighbouring heather or other cover.

In confinement this species has been known to pair with the Tame Goose, the progeny partaking in some respects of the character of both parents. This is a statement of Meyer's.

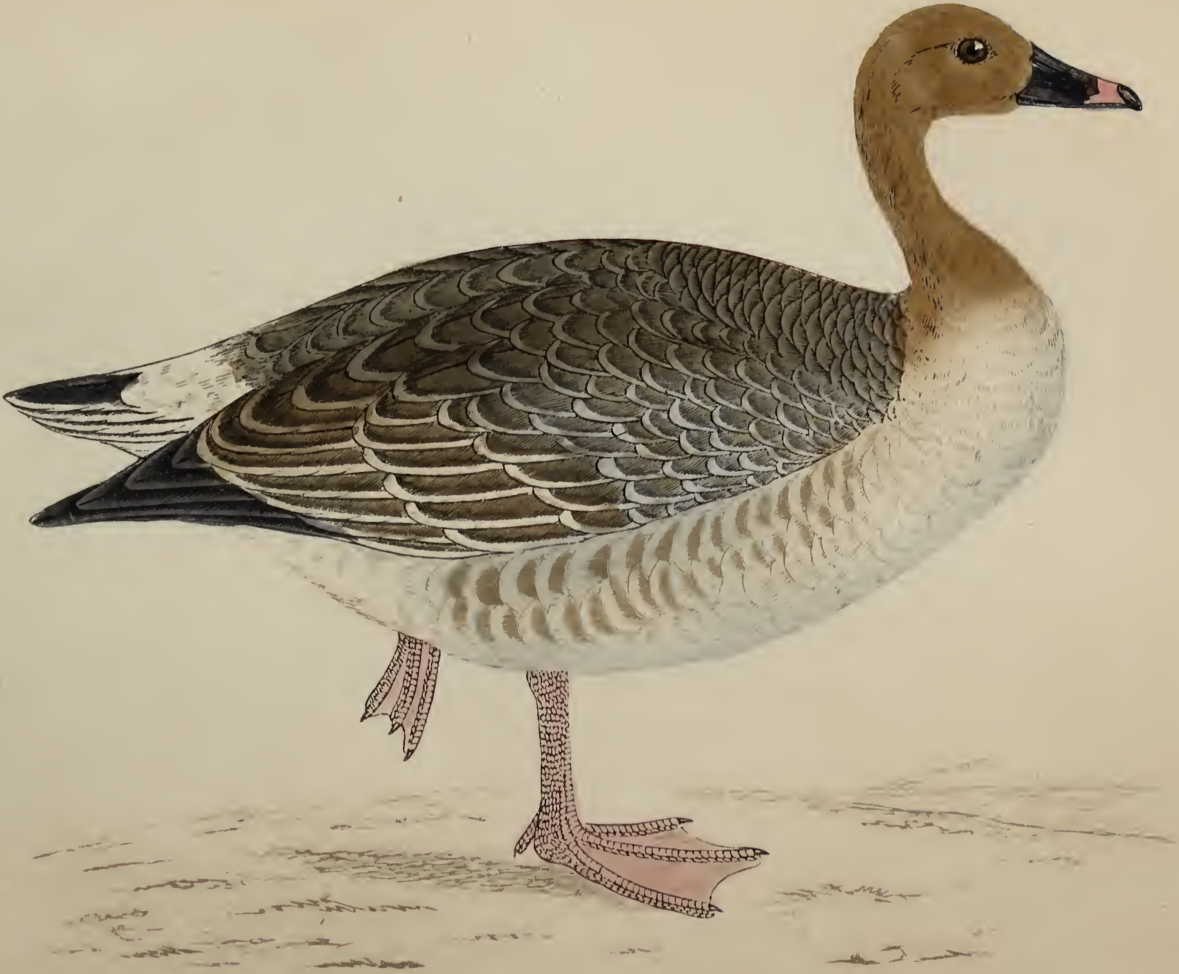
Male; weight, about six pounds; length, two feet eight inches to nearly three feet; the bill, which is rather tapered towards the end, is red or yellowish red, with the exception of the edges, the base, and the tooth, which are black. Iris, dark brown, the eyelids dark grey. Head, crown, neck on the back, and nape, greyish brown, the former colour disposed in lines, giving a furrowed appearance; neck in front, chin, and throat, dull white; breast, dull greyish white, with deeper shades of the same colour across. Back above brown with a slight tinge of grey, and each feather edged with white or greyish white; on the lower part dark greyish brown.

The wings have the second quill feather the longest; they reach, when closed, beyond the end of the tail. Greater and lesser wing coverts, greyish brown, tipped and edged with white; primaries, greyish black; secondaries and tertiaries, greyish brown, edged and tipped with white. Upper and under tail coverts, white. Legs and toes, orange red; claws, black; webs, orange red. This colour varies in depth according to the age of the bird.

The female is smaller.

The young are of a paler grey.

In some of these birds there are a few white feathers around the base of the bill.



PINK FOOTED GOOSE.

PINK-FOOTED GOOSE.

Anser brachyrhynchus, BAILLON.
" *phœnicopus,* BARTLETT.

Anser—A Goose. *Brachyrhynchus.* *Brachüs*—Short.
Rhynchos—A bill.

In the year 1833, M. Baillon, the eminent naturalist of Abbeville, described the present as a new species, under the name which he then assigned to it. It appears, however, according to the statement of Meyer, that M. Temminck has asserted that it had been previously observed in Holland, in the winters of 1829 and 1830, as also subsequently in 1838. Mr. Bartlett was the first to notice it in this country, and unaware that it had been before discovered, as noticed above, gave as its specific name that which has hence become a synonym.

These Geese occur in Europe, Asia, and America, and in cold weather some cross over to the northern parts of Africa. In the first-named continent they have been observed in France, Italy, Hungary, and Turkey, and frequent, for the purpose of breeding, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, and the Hebrides.

In Yorkshire they occur on Thorne Moor. One was shot on the coast in the winter of 1851, as Mr. William Felkin, Junior, of Carrington, near Nottingham, has informed me; one also at Haxby, near York, on the 15th. of January, 1850. My servant found one, which had been barely winged, in a field near Warter, in the East-Riding, on the 9th. of December, 1854. Three were sold in the Doncaster market in 1840. In Northamptonshire it is an occasional visitor, as the Hon. T. L. Powys has written to me. In Norfolk these birds occurred several times near Lynn, in the beginning of 1854; as they had also done in the winter of 1849-50. Two in December, 1851; one, which had been previously wounded, was caught near Upware, on the bank of the Cam, in Cambridgeshire, in January, 1850. Three, one male and two females, at Ely, on the 3rd. of May, 1851; one near Wisbeach in the beginning of 1850. In Norfolk, one out of a flock of twenty, was shot by Lord Coke, in January, 1841.

In Scotland these Geese breed in great numbers, among the Islands of Harris.

The Pink-footed Goose resorts in spring to the northern districts of the three continents, whence it returns in the autumn.

In their wild state they appear to travel in small flocks. Meyer writes, 'Towards the spring these Geese become restless, flying to meadows, waste lands, and heathy commons, and finally leave their winter quarters for more northern regions. Their migratory journeys are performed usually in the day, and the speed at which they sometimes fly has been noticed to amount to forty or fifty miles an hour. The numbers that journey together vary from five to fifty or sixty; and when in large flocks they form a triangular figure, headed by the father of the foremost family.'

These birds have been kept on the ornamental water in St. James' Park, as also in the Zoological Gardens.

They are shy and wary, awake to the slightest noise, roosting together in flocks to their greater security. They repair towards evening to the borders of rivers, lakes, and open sands that verge upon the 'water-mark,' and leave them in the day-time for cultivated districts.

They feed on oats, peas, beans, barley, wheat, buckwheat, and any other kinds of grain, and in lack of these on the roots, buds, and shoots of flags, rushes, and other water-plants.

The voice is a quick and harsh clack.

These birds pair about the middle of May. Mr. J. Macgillivray has remarked that he saw them 'in pairs about the middle of the month, and they had the young fully fledged and strong upon the wing about the end of July.' They had again collected into flocks by the beginning of August.

The eggs are of a pure white colour. Eight were laid by one of these Geese, kept on the water in St. James' Park by the Ornithological Society of London.

Male; length, two feet four inches; bill, bluish black at the base, the remainder pink red, except the tooth, which is also bluish black, but paler towards its base: a narrow line of white feathers surrounds the bill; iris, dark, dusky brown. Head on the sides, crown, and neck on the back, rather dark and fine rufous chocolate brown, the nape paler, shading into yellowish brown on the sides of the neck; throat, also rufous chocolate brown; breast above, reddish fawn-colour; below, white; on the sides, broadly barred with pale brown and greyish white, with which each feather is broadly tipped; back, on the upper part, brownish grey, shaded off into yellowish brown, with dull yellowish white edges and tips to the feathers; below, greyish black, the feathers on the lower part tipped with white.

The wings, when closed, extend from an inch to an inch and a half beyond the end of the tail. Greater wing coverts, dark brownish black; lesser wing coverts, brownish grey, edged and tipped with dull white. Primaries, greyish lead-colour, with white shafts, the second quill feather is the longest in the wing; secondaries, dark leaden grey, the ends nearly white; tertiaries, dusky brownish grey, with dull greyish white outer edges and tips; the shafts are strong and broad. Tail, grey, the feathers broadly tipped and edged with white; the shafts white; underneath the tail is white; it consists of fourteen feathers; upper tail coverts, white, with a pale crescent-shaped mark; under tail coverts, white; legs and toes, pink, with a tinge of red: the hind toe is short. Claws, black, paler at the base; webs, reddish pink.

In some specimens there are a few white feathers about the base of the bill.

WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE.

WHITE-FRONTED WILD GOOSE. LAUGHING GOOSE.

Anser albifrons,	JENYNS.
" *erythropus,*	FLEMING.
Anas albifrons,	PENNANT. MONTAGU.

Anser—A Goose. *Albifrons. Albus*—White. *Frons*—The forehead.

THE Laughing Goose is the common species in Sweden and the other countries of old Scandinavia—Lapland, Norway, and Denmark; and visits also the southern parts of Russia, Poland, Prussia, France, Germany, Italy, and Holland.

It belongs too to some parts of Asia—Japan, according to Temminck, Siberia, and the neighbourhood of the Caspian Sea; and likewise to America, moving, at the different seasons of the year, to and from the regions within the Arctic circle and the United States, through the Fur Countries.

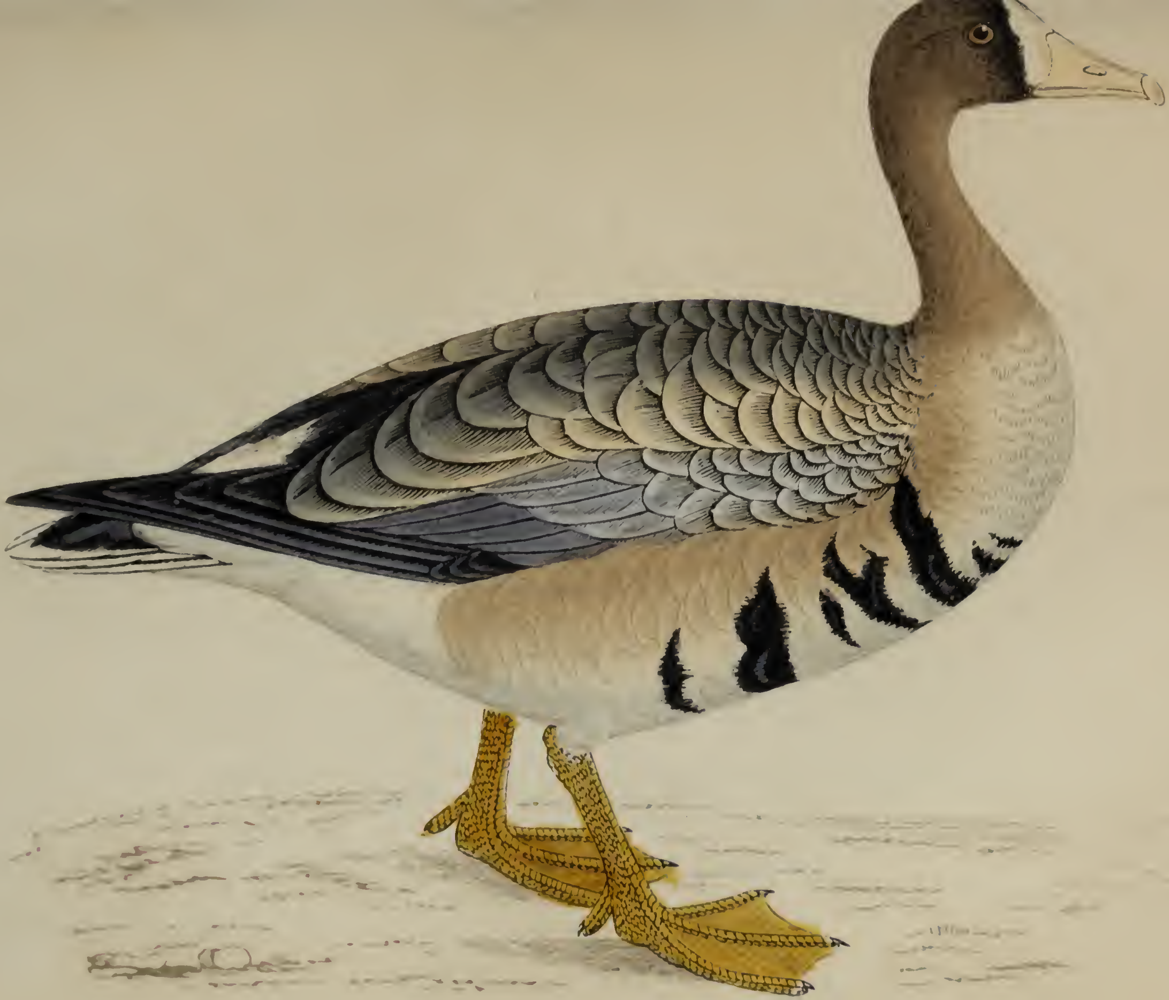
They breed in Tornea Lapland, or Lapmark, a province of Sweden; also in Iceland.

In this country they have occurred in greater or less numbers in Northumberland, Durham, Norfolk, Suffolk, Kent, Hampshire, Sussex, Cambridgeshire, Devonshire, and Cornwall; in fact, no doubt, though they have made no 'matches' here, they belong to 'All England.' Meyer mentions one shot by him in February, 1847, on the Thames, near London.

In Ireland, also, and in Wales, as likewise in Scotland, where Sir William Jardine has met with it in Dumfriesshire, and in the market at Edinburgh.

They frequent marshes and morasses, ponds, and other damp and watery places.

This species is occasionally seen in Northamptonshire, as



WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE

the Hon. T. L. Powys tells me. It used to be a winter visitor to the fens in Cambridgeshire, varying in numbers according to the comparative mildness or severity of the season. In Norfolk several occurred near Lynn, towards the end of January, 1852. They were unusually common there in the beginning of 1854, and are met with annually in the spring and winter. Breydon, near Yarmouth, is also a locality. Specimens are procured near Doncaster and Sheffield in severe weather, and considerable numbers occasionally about Sutton-on-Derwent, near York, though by no means as regular visitants. They are not uncommon at Walton Park, and one was met with near Barnsley: in hard winters some occur near Burlington.

In Cornwall six were seen on Looe River, Helford, December 19th., 1849, and two shot on the 26th. of the same month. In Derbyshire, individuals have occurred by the Trent, in hard weather. The like remark has to be made of Oxfordshire, where small flocks are occasionally seen, but only in the severest seasons.

In Scotland it is a rare winter visitor in Sutherlandshire. It visits Orkney also at the same season.

In Ireland two occurred near Waterford, in February, 1848.

They begin to move northwards by the end of February or the beginning of March, few being ever seen after the middle of that month, and return southwards early in September.

These birds have been kept in the gardens of the Zoological Society, and have reared their young, towards whom they exhibited great attachment. They have also similarly been preserved elsewhere, and appear to do well. In their wild state they collect at times in very large flocks, and associate, to a certain extent, with those of other species of their family, though not with any great intimacy. They seem naturally to resort more to streams and water sides than to the open country, as the other kinds. They are esteemed for the table, and when young are easily tamed.

They fly strong and well, and on going any distance keep in single line; they walk about, too, in a rather graceful manner with quickness and ease.

They feed on clover, turnip leaves, and those of other vegetables, both marine and inland, and corn; beetles and their larvæ, and other insects, with which they also swallow some gravel in aid of digestion.

The note is thought to resemble a laugh, and hence the vernacular name. Meyer likens it to the words 'click,' 'clack,' or 'cling.'

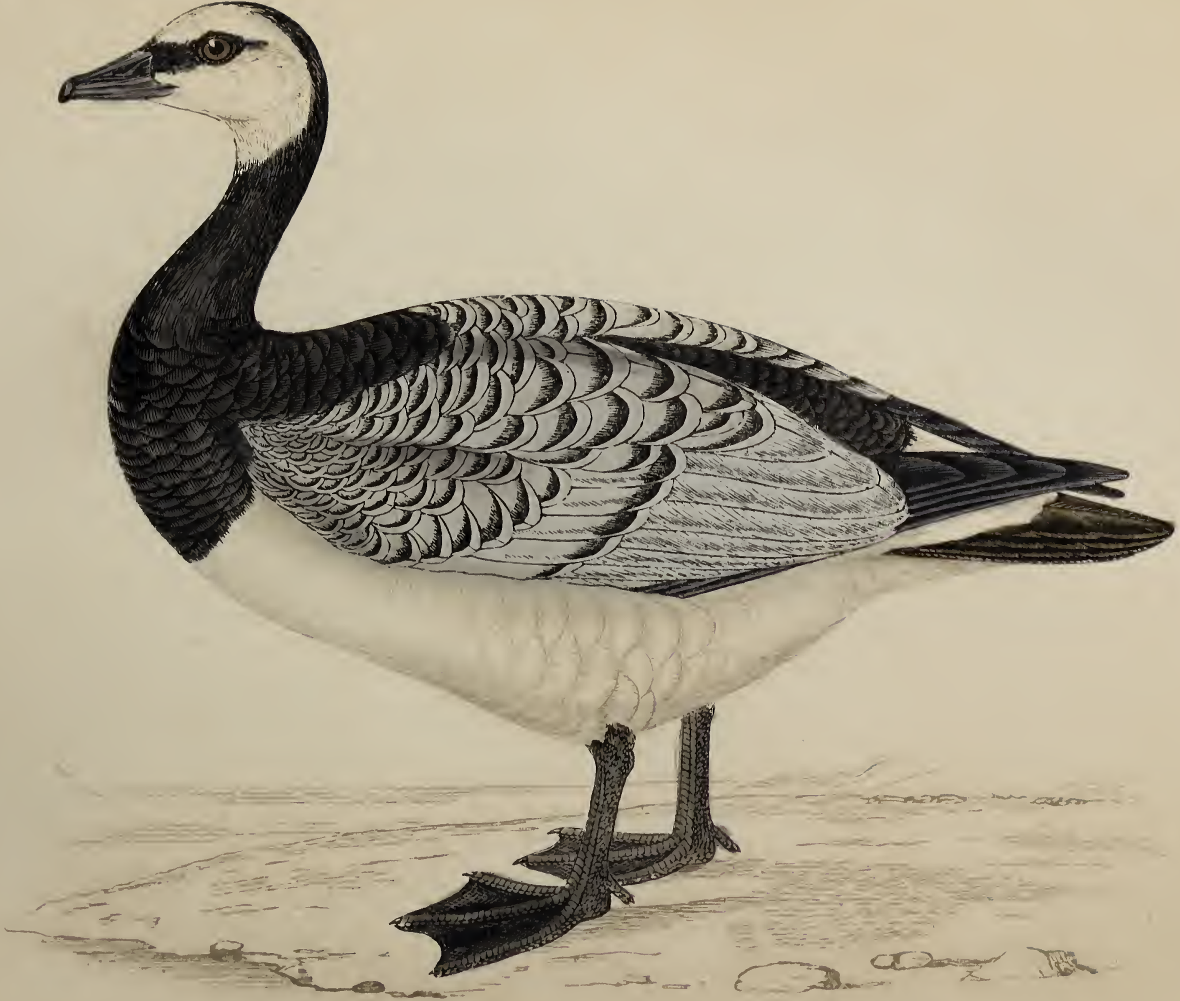
The eggs of this species are of a white colour, with a tinge of pale buff.

Male; weight, from between four and five to as much sometimes as seven pounds; length, two feet three inches; bill, pale yellowish red with a tint of orange, the tooth white; about the base of the upper mandible and the beginning of the forehead, the feathers are white, as indicated by the name of the bird. Iris, deep dark dusky brown; forehead, white or yellowish white, succeeded by a band of shaded black, forming, with that about the chin, a band round that part of the head; head, crown, neck on the back, and nape, brownish grey, or yellowish brown; chin, white bordered with black; throat, pale greyish white; breast above, pale brownish white, with some irregular black bars; below, gradually paler, with broad waves of black more or less distinct; the sides greyish brown, with edgings of dull white: these marks are considered by Audubon to be characteristic of the breeding plumage, and they are no doubt then in their greatest intensity. Back above, dark greyish brown, with pale reddish brown edges to the feathers; below, dark brown.

The wings have the second quill feather the longest; greater and lesser wing coverts, grey, edged with rufous white or white; primaries, bluish black; secondaries, also bluish black; tertiaries, margined with dull white. The tail has the middle feathers dark grey, tipped with white, the outer ones nearly entirely white; upper and under tail coverts, white. Legs and toes, orange-colour; claws, very pale bluish grey; webs, pale reddish orange.

The female has less white on the forehead.

In the young of the first year, the feathers about the base of the upper bill are dark brown; the bill pale brown at the tip. The breast is without the dark bars and patches on the sides.



BERNICLE GOOSE.

BERNICLE GOOSE.

CLAKIS. TREE GOOSE. COMMON BERNICLE GOOSE.
BARNACLE GOOSE.

Anser bernicla,	FLEMING. SELBY.
" *leucopsis,*	JENYNS. GOULD.
Anas leucopsis,	TEMMINCK.
" *erythropus,*	PENNANT. MONTAGU.

Anser—A Goose. *Bernicla*—The Barnacle.

THIS species is abundant in Russia, Lapland, and Spitzbergen, and on many of the shores of the Baltic, Sweden, Denmark, and Finland, Norway, Jutland, and Holstein; and occurs besides in the Faroe Islands and Iceland. It is also plentiful in Holland, and is met with in Germany and France. In Asia, it appears to belong to the northern districts, and to Japan, and in America has been found at Hudson's Bay, and in Canada, as also, though less numerously, in the United States.

In Yorkshire, two were killed on Midgley Moor, September 2nd., 1836. In hard weather specimens are frequently shot near Doncaster, and some are taken occasionally in the neighbourhood of Huddersfield, on the Marsden, Slaithwaite, Meltham, and Holmfirth Moors; others, at times, near York. It is rare near Leeds, but one was shot at Rigton, in 1837. It may be met with in winter weather on the shores of the Humber. Another out of a flock of nine, was killed in Coatham Marsh, near Redcar, on the 1st. of October, 1853.

One was seen in the Louth market, by the Rev. R. P. Alington, no doubt of Lincolnshire occurrence. It used to be met with in the Cambridgeshire Fens, in greater or less plenty, according to the season.

In Norfolk, a pair were procured at Salthouse, in January, 1848: the species is not uncommon in that county in the winter.

In Scotland, it is an occasional visitor, and occurs on the western side of Sutherlandshire more numerously than on the east.

It frequents the sea-coast and sandy places thereby, where grass and other plants find root.

The Bernicle Goose has been noticed in various numbers, more or less, in Lancashire, and on the Firth of Solway, as also in the counties of Northumberland, Devon, Cornwall, Dorset, and Sussex.

It is likewise an Irish species, and has been procured at different times, though only locally. In Orkney, numbers arrive in the autumn, and remain till the spring.

'Its migratory journeys are performed during both night and day, in considerable flocks, and invariably along the sea-coast, skirting the land around headlands and bays, and passing only when necessary over the open sea. The roosting-places are also the sea-coast.' They leave us for more northerly regions early in the spring, none remaining after the middle of March. They return in the autumn.

Some of the birds of this species, preserved on the water in St. James' Park, have produced eggs. They very soon become perfectly tame, and exhibit the longevity in confinement of the other kind, that is to say at least, if given the opportunity. I saw some a year or two since in a quite domesticated state: in the wild condition they are very shy. One is said to have been known to have reached the long period of thirty-two years. After arriving at a 'certain age' there may perhaps in its case have been another consideration, beyond the more scientific one of ascertaining the duration of life in the species: they are considered good for the table.

The late Lord Derby has recorded the circumstance of one of these Geese having paired one year with a Canada Goose, and the following year with a White-fronted Goose. In the former instance no eggs were laid; in the latter nine or ten.

They are birds of sociable habits, both among themselves and with other kindred kinds. It is well known that a ridiculous notion formerly prevailed respecting the origin of the Bernicle Goose. I copy the following from Bishop Stanley's 'Familiar History of Birds:'—

'It will scarcely be now-a-days believed, that this Bernicle or Tree Goose actually derived its name from a very general belief that, instead of being hatched, like other birds, from an egg, it was produced from a shell which grew on trees and rotten wood, and the shell was therefore called the Goose-bearing shell, *(Lepas anatifera.)* For this foolish idea there was no other foundation than pieces of wood and decayed trees being often found in parts of the sea frequented by these Geese, all covered over with these shells, which seem to grow upon little stalks; and as the feelers of the fish within it are feathered or fringed, they were supposed to be the downy coverings of the young Goslings.'

As a curious specimen of ignorant reasoning and credulity, we shall extract an account written by the sage Gerard, as he was called, author of a well-known book called 'Gerard's Herbal, or History of Plants.' This author was born at Nantwich, in Cheshire, and lived in the time of Queen Elizabeth:—

'There is,' says he, 'a small island in Lancashire, called 'the Pile of Foulders,' on the west side of the entrance into Morecombe bay, about fifteen miles south of Ulverston, wherein are found the broken pieces of old and bruised ships, also the trunks and bodies, with the branches of old and rotten trees, cast up there likewise; wherein is found a certain spume or froth, that in time breedeth unto certain shells, in shape like those of the muskle, but sharper pointed, and of a whiter colour, wherein is contained a thing in form like a lace of silke, finely woven as it were together; one end whereof is fastened unto the inside of the shell, even as the fish of oisters and muskles are: the other end is made fast unto the belly of a rude masse or lump, which in time cometh to the shape and form of a bird: when it is perfectly formed, the shell gapeth open, and the first thing that appeareth is the aforesaid lace or string; next come the legs of the bird hanging out, and as it groweth greater, it openeth the shell by degrees, till at length it is all come forth, and hangeth only by the bill. In short space after, it cometh to full maturitie, and falleth into the sea, where it gathereth feathers and groweth to a fowl bigger than a Mallard, and lesser than a Goose, which the people in Lancashire call by no other name than a Tree Goose; which place aforesaid, and all those parts adjoining, do so much abound therewith, that one of the best is bought for threepence.' So fully convinced was the sage Gerard of the 'truth hereof,' that he closes his account with an invitation to all who doubted the fact to apply to him:—'If any doubt, may it please them to repair to me, and I shall satisfie them by the testimonie of good witnesses.'

They fly in a strong and powerful manner, the pairs or families keeping together and forming a line. In alighting a considerable noise is produced by the wings.

Their food consists of the leaves and roots of maritime plants, as well as at times of the blades of growing corn, rye, and grasses, as also of insects and their larvæ, for which they seek with the head and neck below water.

These birds appear to breed in large swamps and morasses.

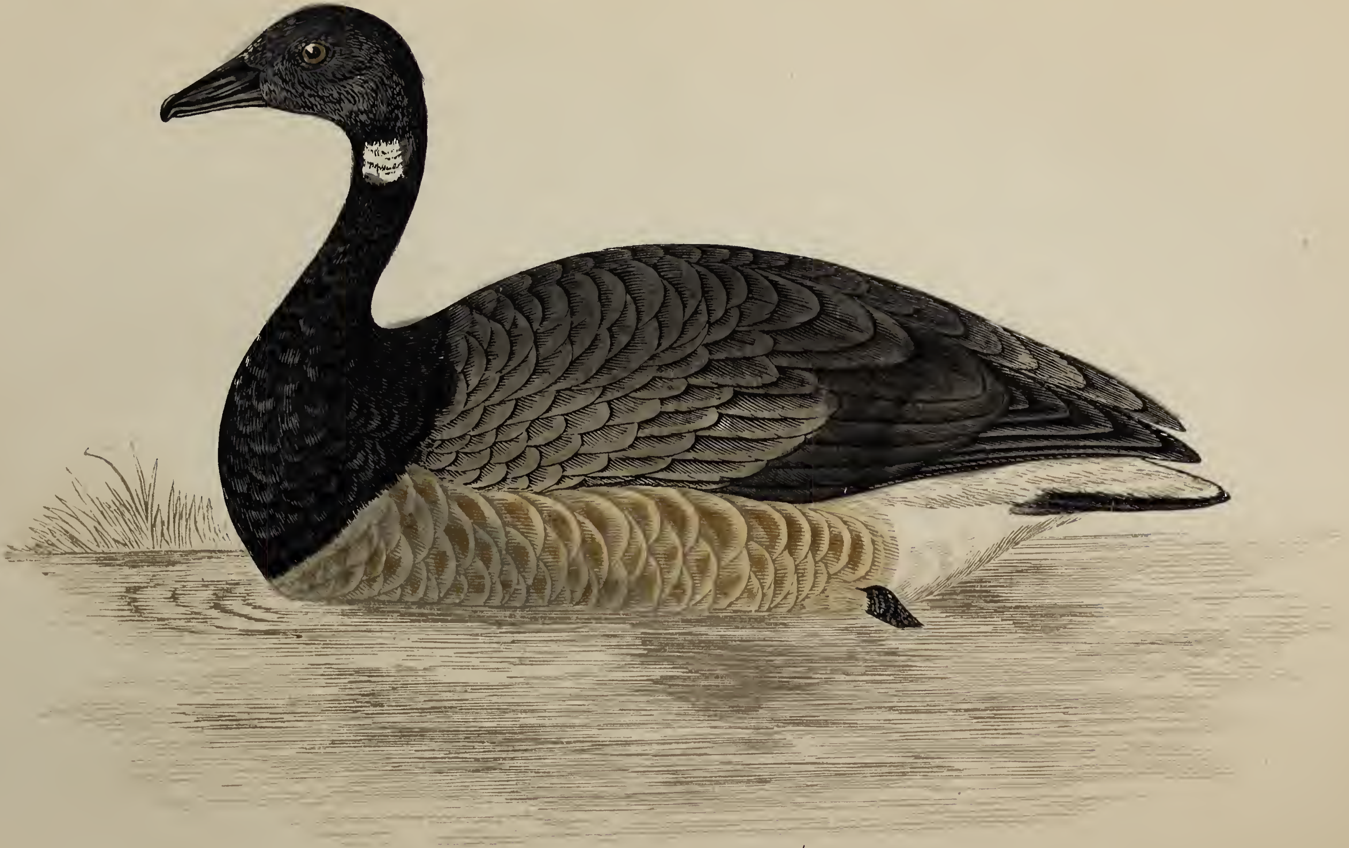
The eggs are of a greenish white colour.

Male; weight, between four and five pounds; length, two feet one inch; bill, very small and black; from its base a broad black patch or line extends to the eye; iris, dark brown; forehead, and head on the sides, white; crown, neck all round, and nape, glossy black. Chin and throat, white; breast, on the upper part, glossy black, the remainder greyish white, ending in silvery white, with light greyish bars on the sides; the feathers on the legs black, with pale tips; back, fine bluish grey, with black or brownish black and white bars, the latter colour gradually widened, giving it an elegant dappled appearance; below, the back is black, on the lower part, bluish black.

The wings have the first quill feather the longest. Greater and lesser wing coverts, fine bluish grey, each feather edged with white, inside which at the tip is a crescent of bluish black. Primaries, almost black, edged a little way from the tips with bluish grey, at the base light grey on the outer webs; tertiaries, grey, with white edges, and a crescent of bluish black at the tip, inside the white margin. The tail, which consists of fourteen feathers, is nearly black, the feathers are almost of a length, so that it is nearly square at the end; upper tail coverts, white, in a crescent shape; under tail coverts, silvery white. The legs, which are short and thick, are, as the toes, claws, and webs, black.

The female is like the male.

The young have the forehead spotted with black, the white on the sides of the head interspersed with black feathers: the streak between the bill and the eye much wider than in the old birds; the grey marks on the sides of the breast darker, and the white not so clear. The back darker, with a tinge of red on the tips of the feathers; the wing coverts similarly marked; the legs not so dark as in the old bird, being tinged with reddish brown.



BRENT GOOSE.

BRENT GOOSE.

Anser brenta,	FLEMING. SELBY.
" *torquatus,*	JENYNS.
Anas bernicla,	PENNANT. MONTAGU. TEMMINCK.

Anser—A Goose. *Brenta*—...........?

THESE Geese are very plentiful in Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Nova Zembla, Spitzbergen, Greenland, Iceland, and other countries of the north. They visit also France, Germany, Pomerania, and Holland.

In America, Captain James Ross noticed them in different places, up to the highest latitudes that have been reached, and in these they breed. They are well known also in the United States and Canada, and in the neighbourhood of Hudson's Bay.

With us this species is a regular winter visitor, and occurs in large multitudes on any parts of the coast that are suitable to them, such as those of Norfolk, Suffolk, Kent, and Northumberland.

In Yorkshire, it is met with at Sheffield, as also, though rarely, in the vicinity of Leeds, and likewise, in hard winters, near Doncaster, and York occasionally, the moors round Huddersfield, and at the sea-side. In Cambridgeshire several were shot near Wisbeach, in the beginning of 1850. In Norfolk it is a common species. The Rev. R. P. Alington has seen this bird in Louth market, the produce no doubt of Lincolnshire. In Surrey one was shot at Wipley Farm near Bramley. In Cornwall, one was found dead on the sands, at Gwyllyn Vase, in December, 1846. A flock visited the Trent in Derbyshire, in January, 1831.

In Scotland the Brent Goose is met with in Sutherlandshire, but most so on the eastern side of the county. It is equally plentiful in the Hebrides and Shetland.

In Ireland it is also common, and some are said to have bred there, but it is considered that they may have been birds which had been partially tamed and had flown away.

It arrives in Orkney in the autumn, quitting again the following spring.

This species chiefly affects the sea-shore, but some have at different times been met with inland.

They arrive in large numbers about the beginning of October, and others keep constantly joining the first comers till the beginning of November. They begin to leave again by the end of February or beginning of March, and before April all have gone.

They are excellent eating, and are very easily kept in a domesticated state. They collect in immense flocks, so as often even to blacken the surface of the ground. In their wild state they appear not to be shy of human approach, probably as being unaccustomed to danger from that quarter in the distant parts of the world to which they naturally belong. Here, however, like so many other birds, which if not disturbed and harassed, would retain their natural character, they soon become extremely wary. Like the fortresses in the Baltic, they are only to be approached in the day-time, when on the water, by a low gun-boat, the invention of Colonel Hawker, previously to the adoption of which mode, they used to afford many 'Nights Entertainments' to the cautious fowlers of a less inventive age. They thrive well in confinement, and I have seen them on a lawn happy and contented; they have been known, as stated by Audubon and others, to produce young while thus kept.

They rise high into the air in circular courses before departing on their migration, and then move off over the sea. The can dive easily if desirous to do so, but such is not their ordinary habit.

They feed on marine vegetables, wrack, and grasses, and occasionally on small shell-fish; some sand is also swallowed.

Meyer says of the note, 'Its description is varied, sounding like the different expressions, cuang, rott, and crock, all expressed in a hurried and harsh manner.' The clamour of the gabbling and cackling of a flock when feeding or resting is heard at a considerable distance.

The nest of the Brent Goose is formed of vegetable materials, collected together in swampy places.

The eggs are white, with a faint tinge of brown or greyish.

Male; weight, not quite three pounds; length, one foot nine inches, to nearly two feet; bill, black, small, and rather narrow; iris, dark blackish brown. Head, crown, and neck all round, dull black, with a small white patch, intermixed with a few black feathers on the sides of the last-named: the amount of each colour varies in different individuals. Breast above, black; below, greyish slate-colour, the edges of the feathers lighter coloured; back above, dark dull slate-coloured, blackish brown, the edges and tips of the feathers paler than the remainder; below, blackish.

The wings have the first quill feather the longest; greater and lesser wing coverts, dark brownish black, margined with a paler shade; primaries, blackish brown; secondaries, also blackish brown; tertiaries, dark blackish brown, the edges paler coloured. Tail, dark blackish brown; upper tail coverts, white; under tail coverts, white; they extend in length beyond the end of the tail. Legs, toes, claws, and webs, black with a tinge of reddish brown.

The female is a little less in size than the male. Her plumage has more of a shade of rusty brown.

The young, the first year, are without or nearly without the characteristic white mark on the side of the neck. The head and neck are of a dull leaden grey colour, the breast below light grey, the feathers of the back and wing coverts are tipped with brown. The legs are paler than in the adult birds, and more inclining to brown.

RED-BREASTED GOOSE.

SIBERIAN GOOSE. RED-BREASTED BERNICLE.

Anser ruficollis,	FLEMING.	SELBY.
Anas ruficollis,	PENNANT.	MONTAGU.

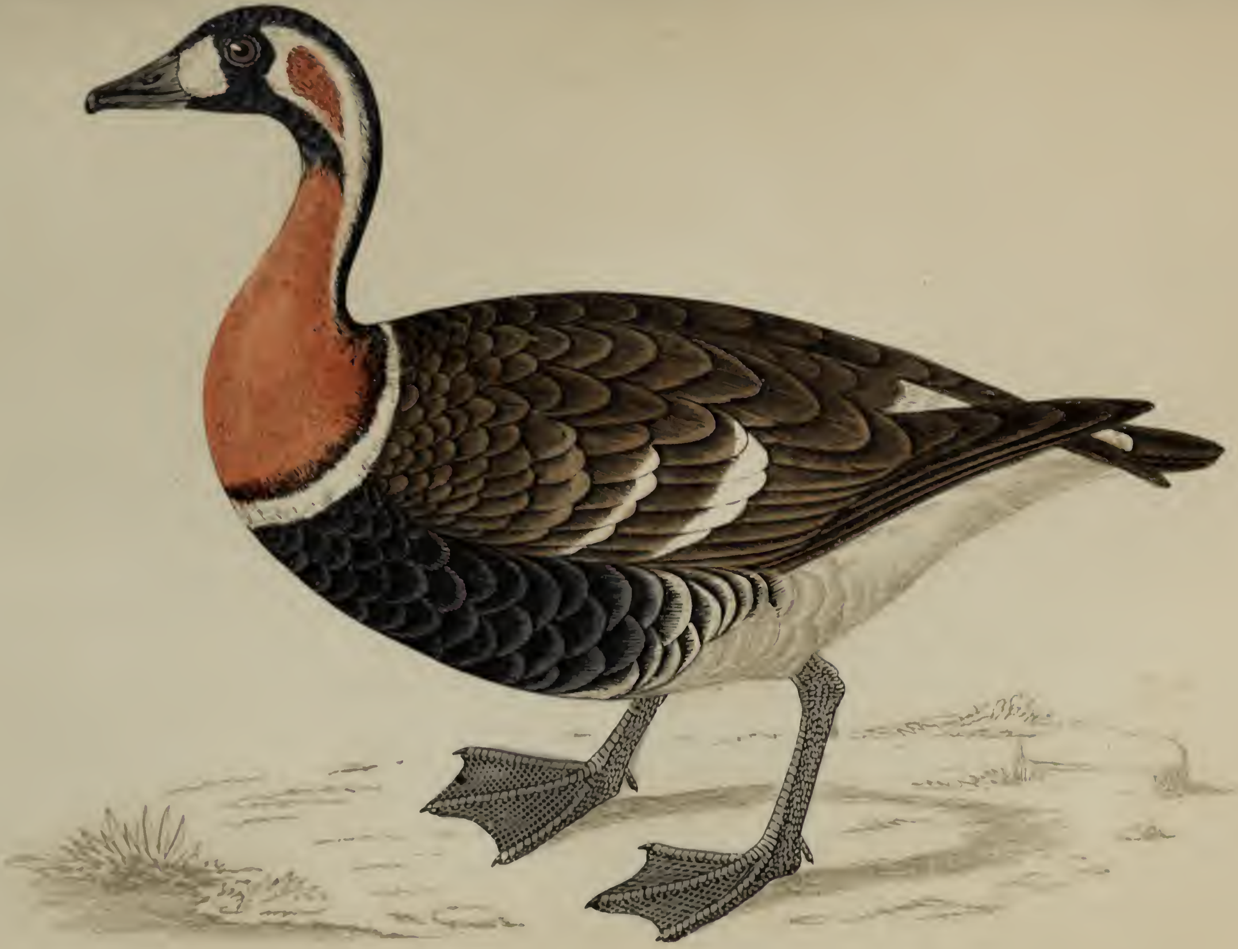
Anser—A Goose. *Ruficollis. Rufus*—Red. *Collis*—A neck.

THIS handsome species belongs to the northern districts of Europe and Asia, and breeds in Siberia and Russia, along the shores of the Frozen Ocean. In Iceland it has been noticed, and also in Denmark and Jutland, in flocks of four or five. In Sweden, according to Professor Nilsson, it occurred once in 1793, and once in 1830. In France, only one example appears as yet to have been noticed: it was obtained near Strasbourg. In Holland likewise only one; in Belgium one; and in Germany one. In Asia, several were observed about Persia, and in the neighbourhood of the Caucasian range.

In this country the first recorded specimen was taken near London, during the hard frosts of the year 1766, and was obtained by Marmaduke Tunstall, Esq. The next was captured about the same time near Wycliffe, the 'cunabula gentis' of the Great Reformer, whose family derived its name from that place, in Yorkshire. Another was shot near the town of Berwick-on-Tweed. In Norfolk, one at Halvergate, in the year 1805. In the county of Cambridge, others during the hard winter of 1813. In Devonshire, one was killed at Kenton Warren, in 1828; and another by the River Teign, February the 1st., 1837.

In winter this Goose moves to warmer regions.

These birds appear to be considered very good eating. They soon become tame in confinement.



RED-BREASTED GOOSE.

They feed on green vegetables in preference to grain, but, on the principle of 'Hobson's choice,' put up with the latter if no better be forthcoming.

They utter their call-note to keep each other together, or if alarmed by a bird of prey: Meyer expresses it by the word 'tsjackwoy.'

Male; weight, about three pounds; length, one foot eight, nine, or ten inches; bill, very short and nearly black, with a tinge of red; tooth, black. Iris, hazel; between the eye and the base of the bill is a large whitish patch; the eye is encircled with a line of dark brownish black. Forehead, and head on the crown, dark brownish black; on the sides is a patch of chesnut, speckled with black, and surrounded with a narrow line of white, which runs down the neck, bordering the black of the throat, and the back of the neck; neck on the back and nape, dark brownish black. The neck in front is rich orange chesnut red, bordered below with dashes of white. Chin and throat, dark brownish black; breast above, rich orange chesnut red, beneath which runs a narrow white band, and a narrow black one, in a festooned shape; on the middle and sides black, some of the feathers bordered with white; below white, with some waves of dusky brown; back, very dark blackish brown.

The wings expand to the width of three feet ten inches. Greater wing coverts, dusky black, margined with white; lesser wing coverts, dusky black, edged with greyish white, forming two bars across the wing; primaries, black; secondaries, also black. Tail, black, tipped with white; upper tail coverts, white; under tail coverts, also white. Legs and toes, dark brownish black, with a tinge of red. Webs, dark brownish black.

EGYPTIAN GOOSE.

Anser Egyptiacus,	JENYNS.
Anas Egyptiaca,	BEWICK.
Chenalopex Egyptiaca,	GOULD.

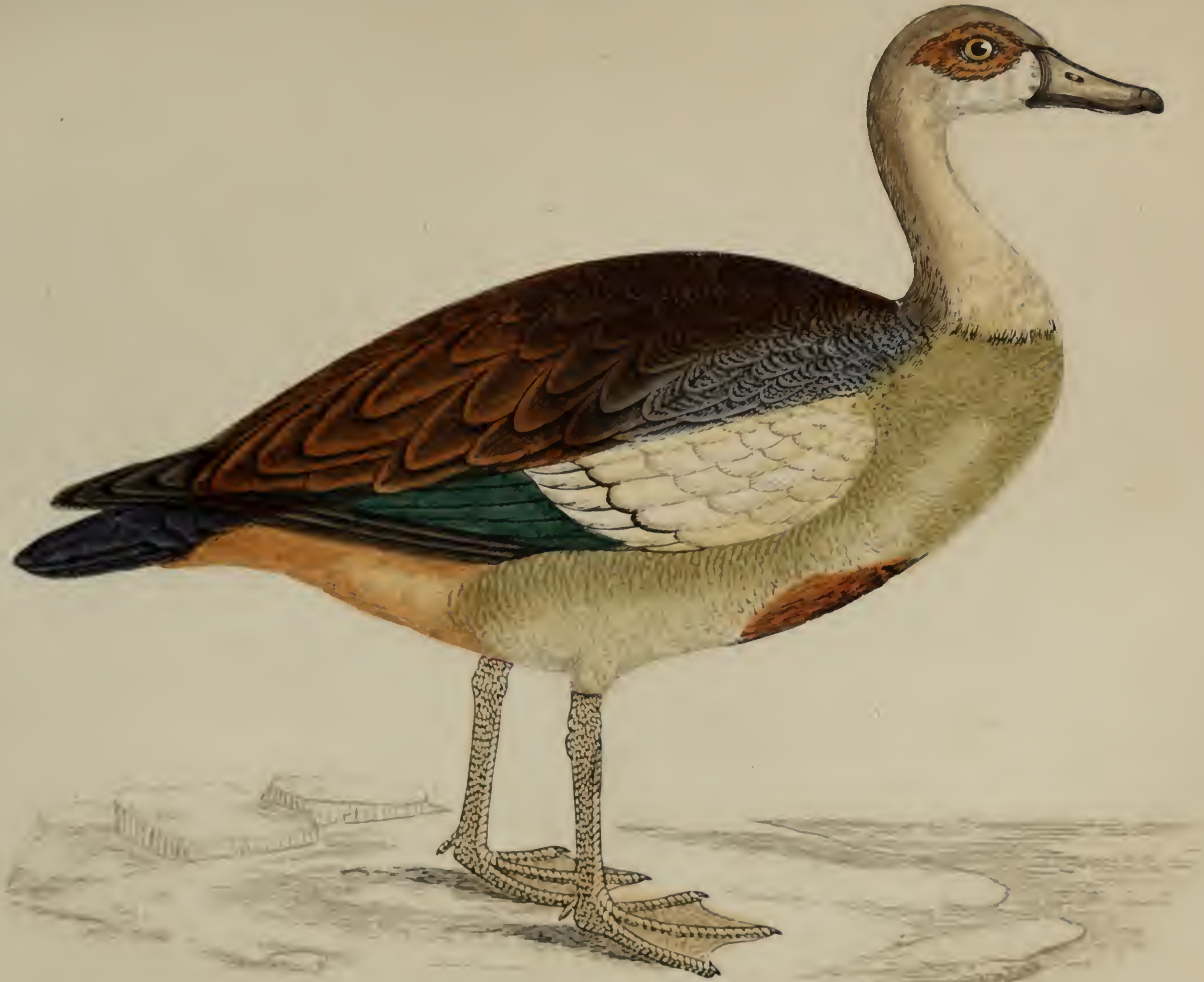
Anser—A Goose. *Egyptiacus*—Egyptian.

THIS bird, as denoted by its name, is a native of Africa, and occurs throughout the northern mediety of that continent. In Europe it is found in Turkey and the adjoining countries —in Germany, one was shot near Liege, and another also on the Meuse; divers in other parts: likewise in Sicily, and the islands of the Grecian Archipelago.

The shores of inland seas, rivers, and lakes, are the situations in which it is to be found.

One of these Geese, as Mr. W. C. Newby has informed me, was shot near Stockton-on-Tees, in the county of Durham, on the 2nd. of November, 1852; it was one of four seen at the same time. The circumstance is recorded in 'The Naturalist,' volume iii, page 60. In Cornwall, one is mentioned in the same magazine, volume ii, page 85, by John Gatcombe, Esq., as having been shot in the neighbourhood of Launceston. There was not the slightest indication in the look of the bird to lead one to suppose that it had ever been kept in confinement. Another, of which Mr. William Fenwick has written me word, was killed near Stanhope, also in the county of Durham, in the beginning of 1855. In Suffolk, a fine specimen was shot at Butley, near Woodbridge, about the 1st. of April, 1852. In Kent, five were seen about Romney Marsh for some few days in July, 1846. In the county of Oxford, one, on a piece of water at Shelswell; and another at Blenheim, the seat of the Duke of Marlborough, in December, 1847.

In Berkshire, one at Thatchem, in the month of January,



EGYPTIAN GOOSE

1795. In Sussex, an Egyptian Goose was shot on the harbour at Shoreham, on the 5th. of January, 1848; another in the parish of Shermanbury, on the 11th. of the same month; one at Pevensey, in January, 1850; one also near Seaford. In Norfolk, one on Ormesby Broad, on the 11th. of March, 1848, and a second a few days afterwards; two others, a male and a female off Yarmouth, on the 28th of April, 1851; Colonel Hawker refers to two shot in the same county. One on Derwent Lake, in Westmoreland, on the 2nd. of the following May. In Cambridgeshire, one in Fulbourn Fields, the middle of September, 1852. In Dorsetshire, two in the year 1836. In Hampshire, Colonel Hawker speaks of three having been killed at Longparish, in the winter of 1823, and of a flock of eighty appearing near the same place the following year, during a tremendous gale from the west, when two more were obtained. In Northumberland, five were seen on the Fern Islands, in the month of April, 1830. In Somersetshire, four were shot on the Severn, near Bridgewater, in February, 1840.

In the Isle of Man, nine were seen together, in September, 1838.

In Ireland the species has also been met with.

In Scotland, three were shot at Campsie, near Glasgow, in November, 1832. A small flock were also noticed on the River Tweed, in the month of February, 1839.

In the garden of the Zoological Society, an Egyptian Goose paired, in 1838, with a drake of the common domestic species; also in 1839. Young birds were hatched both years.

These birds appear to be of a wild and wary nature, and also, it is said, of a quarrelsome disposition; they are, however, readily kept in a half-domesticated state.

They dive, on occasion, with extraordinary speed, assisting themselves, no doubt, by the 'remigium alarum,' and can also run in a tolerably quick manner. Meyer says, 'On the water it swims apparently with great exertion, having its fore parts very low in the water, and its hinder part very much elevated; to such an extent, that when swimming, its knees are invariably above that element. When the Egyptian Goose is pursued, it does not take to the water, unless as a means of crossing over to the opposite shore, but it runs for the shelter of some bush or thicket of long herbage, which proves the fact of its being more a land than a water inhabitant.

On the wing the Egyptian Goose is strong, and easily to be detected by its appearance, in consequence of its very long pinions, but it has great trouble apparently in rising from the ground: during its migrations it flies high; and when in a flock, they form double lines, after the manner of other Geese.'

They Swallow some gravel to help the digestion of their food, which they seek at times in stubble fields, as well as by the sides of streams and other waters. Barley and oats, as also green herbage, the roots of water-plants, worms, snails, and insects generally, are all suitable to their wants.

The note is a 'quack' sharply repeated.

These birds are believed to pair for life, and are much attached to each other. They make their nest, it is said, of reeds, leaves, and the stems of water-plants, and give it a lining of cotton and feathers. It is always placed near the water, and has been known on the surface, supported by the surrounding floating vegetation.

The eggs are of a dull white colour, with a tinge of buff, and six or eight in number.

Male; weight, five pounds; length, two feet two to two feet four inches; bill, pale brown, except the tooth, which is dark brownish black, as are also the edges and the base. Iris, pale yellow, the eyelids red; around the eye is a patch of chesnut brown. Forehead, rich reddish brown; head on the sides, pale rufous or yellowish white; crown, rich reddish or yellowish white; neck on the sides, pale rufous or yellowish white; on the back, rich reddish brown, finely pencilled with transverse waved lines; in front pale rufous brown or buff, with a darker ring around its base. Chin and throat, pale rufous or yellowish white; the breast has a patch of chesnut brown on the centre; above it is pale rufous brown, below pale brown—nearly white; the sides faintly pencilled with minute waved transverse lines. Back, rich pale ferruginous brown, finely pencilled with transverse waved lines; on the lower part nearly black.

The wings expand to the width of four feet three inches; they have a short blunt spur at the bend; greater wing coverts, white, with a deep black bar near the tip; lesser wing coverts, white tipped with black, forming a narrow black band; primaries, nearly black, with a tinge of green, brightest on the edges; secondaries, blackish brown, tinged with reddish and edged with chesnut, black at the tips, the outer webs brilliant varying green; tertiaries, rich reddish brown, greyish brown on the inner webs. Tail, nearly black, upper tail coverts, also black; under tail coverts, yellowish rust-colour. The legs, which are rather long, and give a peculiar appearance to the bird, as a Goose, are, as the toes, of a pinkish colour.

The female is like the male, but the colours less bright. Bill, pale yellowish red; iris, brown; the chesnut-coloured patch around the eye is smaller and not so perfect. The ring round the neck is not so distinct, and smaller in size; the mark on the breast is not so well defined or large as in the male; the feathers of the back are tinged with grey. The white on the wings is less pure; secondaries and tertiaries, tinged with grey. Legs and toes, pale yellowish red.

SPUR-WINGED GOOSE

GAMBO GOOSE.

Anser Gambensis,	FLEMING.
Anas Gambensis,	BEWICK.

Anser—A Goose. *Gambensis*—From Gambia (?)

THIS is another African species.

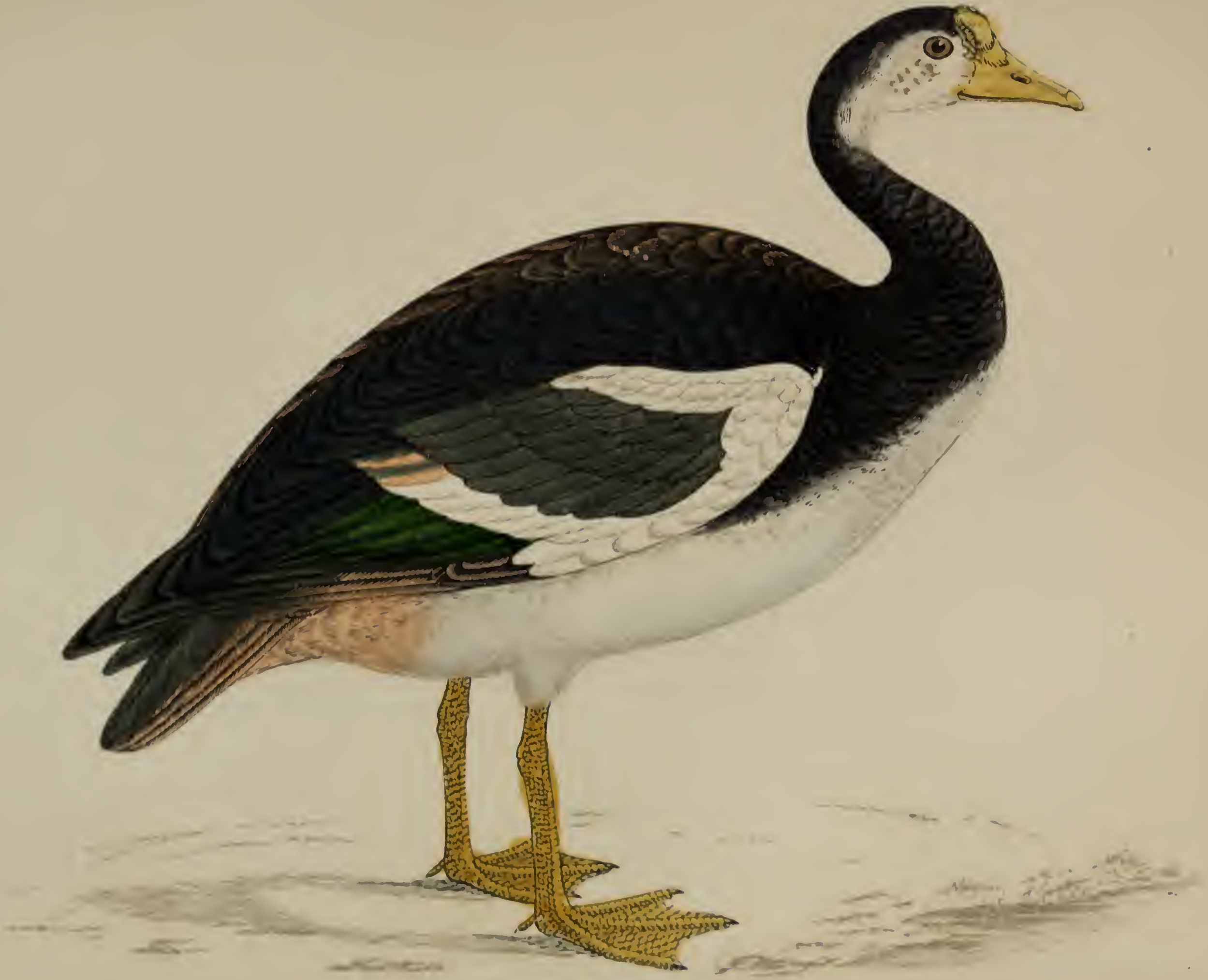
One of these birds was killed in Cornwall, near St. Germains, the 20th. of June, 1821.

About the middle of February, 1855, another was shot near Banff, N.B.—an appropriate 'Nota Bene' of the occurrence of the second English or European specimen of this rare bird—as recorded in 'The Naturalist,' for August, 1855, by Mr. Thomas Edward, of that place.

The Spur-winged Goose has been kept in the garden of the Zoological Society. It appears to be of a morose and domineering disposition. The spur on the wing, whence the name of the bird, seems to be used as a weapon of attack. The one mentioned in the beginning of this article, was observed, when first seen, to associate with some Geese of the common kind at a farm.

Male; bill, dull reddish orange yellow; iris, amber colour. Head on the crown, dull brown; neck on the back, also the same colour; on the sides of the upper part, white spotted with brown; on the lower, black. Chin and throat, white; breast on the sides, black; in front and all down, white; back, deep metallic brown, showing purple and copper-colour in different lights, beautifully burnished with dark green.

The wings are armed at the bend with a strong spur about five eighths of an inch in length. It is of a white colour, and turns upwards, and rather inwards. The whole



SPUR-WINGED GOOSE.

of the upper and front edges of the wings are white. The second, third, and fourth feathers are of equal length, and the longest; the first and fifth a little shorter. Greater wing coverts, white, forming a band of that colour across the wing; the primaries and secondaries have most of the outer feathers of a burnished green. The tertiaries are brilliantly bronzed and glossed with a metallic green; they are as long as the quill feathers. Tail, brown; under tail coverts, white. Legs and toes, red, or orange yellow.

CANADA GOOSE.

CRAVAT GOOSE.

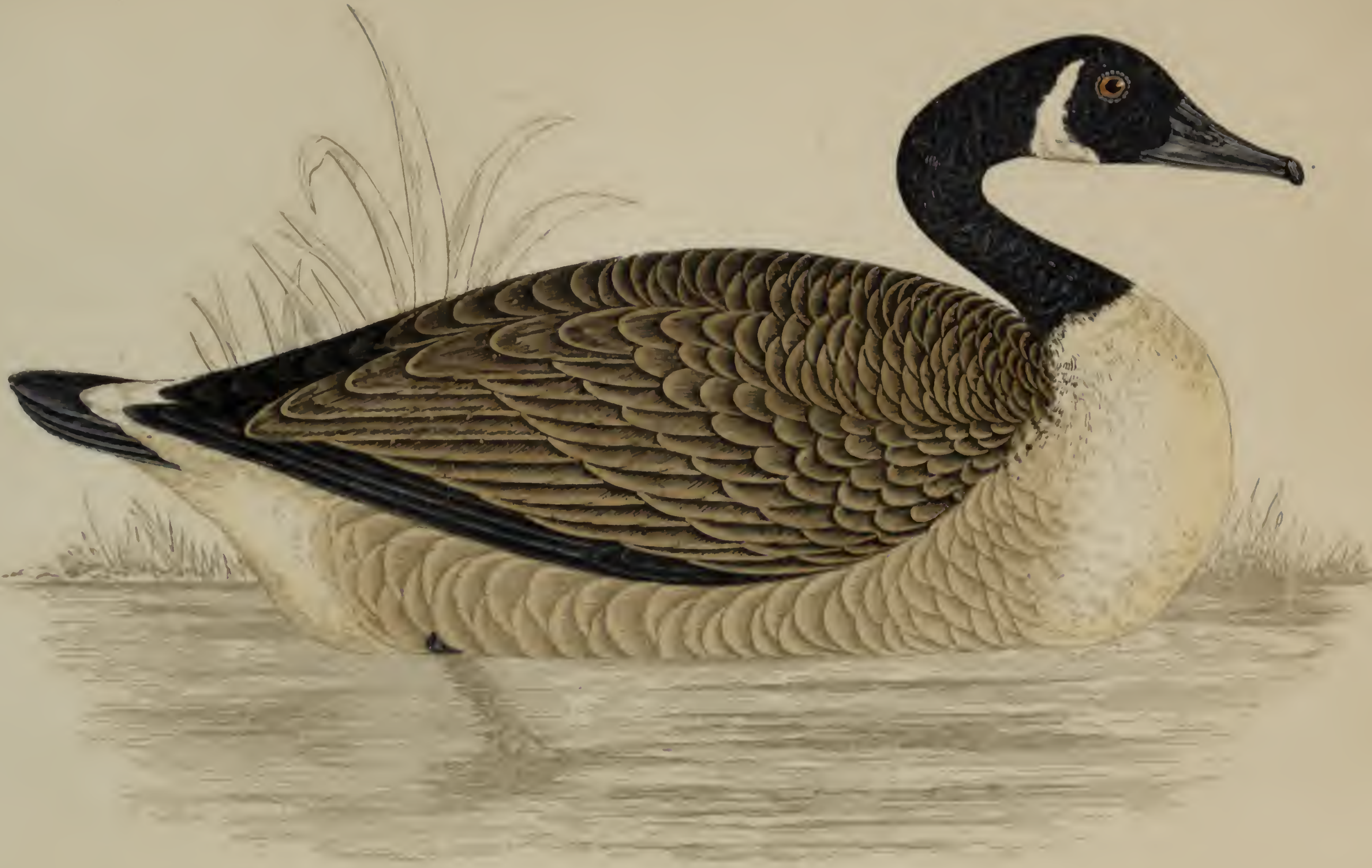
Anser Canadensis,	FLEMING.
Anas Canadensis,	BEWICK.
Cygnus Canadensis,	JENYNS.

Anser—A Goose. *Canadensis*—Of, or belonging to Canada.

THE name of the Canada Goose indicates the country of which it is a native. Immense flocks occur about Hudson's Bay, and in the other boreal districts of North America—Labrador, Newfoundland, and others. They go as far south in the summer as Carolina. The species appears to be plentiful also in Greenland and Spitzbergen.

In this country many have been observed and obtained. In Yorkshire, two were shot by Mr. William Mosey, of Skerne, near Driffield. In Cornwall, one was shot a few years since in the month of September, on the banks of the Laira; three or four also were obtained at different times at St. Germains: one on the Scilly Islands. In Oxfordshire, one on Port Meadow, in February, 1828; and another on Otmoor, in the winter of 1845, near Weston-on-the-Green. In Derbyshire, a pair remained for a short time on a pool at Melbourne, the second week in May, 1849. In Hampshire, Mr. Yarrell says that several have been shot. In Cambridgeshire, the Rev. Leonard Jenyns states that large flocks have been observed, and some birds obtained. In Durham, many were taken on the sea-shore near Hartlepool, in the months of January and February, 1814, during the severe snow-storms of that date, which I can just remember myself, and which have been paralleled by none since till the same period in the present year, 1855.

The Canada Goose has occurred also in Ireland.



CANADA GOOSE.

These birds migrate northwards and southwards, the former in the spring, and the latter in the autumn.

They have been kept tame on various waters, as those of St. James' Park and the Zoological Gardens, London; and at Gosford House, in Haddingtonshire, the seat of Lord Wemyss; and in each have reared their young. They readily mix, and have been known to pair with the common species; as also the Gander with the Bernicle Goose. They are good birds for the table.

'A Canada Goose,' writes the Right Rev. Dr. Stanley, Bishop of Norwich, 'was observed to associate itself with a house-dog, and would never quit the kennel except for the purpose of feeding, when it would return again immediately. It always sat by the dog, but never presumed to go into the kennel except in rainy weather. Whenever the dog barked, the Goose would cackle, and run to the person at whom she supposed the dog was barking, trying to bite him by the heels. Sometimes she would attempt to feed with the dog, but this was not allowed by the dog, who treated his faithful friend with as much indifference as the farmer before mentioned. The Goose would never go to roost at night with her natural companions unless driven by main force, and when in the morning she was turned into the field, she would never stir from the gate, but sit there the whole day in sight of her favourite.

At last, orders were given that she should be no longer molested, but suffered to accompany the dog as she liked. Being thus left to herself, she ran about the yard with him all the night; and whenever the dog went out of the yard, and ran into the village, the Goose as constantly accompanied him, contriving to keep up with him by the assistance of her wings; and thus running and flying would follow him to any distance. This extraordinary affection of the Goose towards the dog, which continued till his death, two years after it was first observed, is supposed to have originated from his having once saved her from a fox. While the dog was ill, the mourning bird never quitted him day or night, not even to feed; and it was apprehended she would have starved to death, had not a pan of corn been placed every day close to the kennel.. All this time she generally sat close by him, and would not suffer any one to approach, except the person who brought the dog's or her own food. The end of the poor bird was very tragical, for, when the dog died, she still kept possession of the kennel; and a new house-dog having been introduced, which in size and colour resembled that lately lost, the poor Goose was unhappily deceived; and going, as usual, within his reach, the new dog seized her by the throat, and killed her on the spot.'

'The Canada Geese appear to be peculiarly susceptible birds, and will sometimes make up by imagination or fancy what is deficient in reality. Thus a Canada Gander in a nobleman's park, near Windsor, having no mate for two springs, regularly mounted guard opposite a draw-bridge, in front of a thicket, where it was clear he imagined there was a nest, and defended the approaches very courageously, continuing this ideal defence till the first brood of ducklings appeared from some other quarter, which he immediately took under his protection; and in the second year he actually chaperoned twenty-five. It should be added, that there was no nest of any kind whatever within the precincts which he so strenuously guarded.'

They fly with the neck stretched out straight in front. On the ground they walk in a showy manner, frequently tossing the head, and bending at the same time the neck.

They feed on green vegetables and insects.

The note is considered to resemble the syllable 'wook,' frequently repeated.

The Canada Goose makes for herself, or rather for her expected brood, a 'downy bed' of feathers, within a structure of dry plants of different kinds. It is of large size, and raised to the height of several inches. It is begun to be built in March or April, and is placed among deep grass, near the water. Audubon mentions his having found one on the stump of a large tree, standing in the middle of a small pond, and at a height of about twenty feet. Occasionally they build in the old nests of other large birds, and while the hen sits the male bird keeps sailing about over the water in the neighbourhood, but not coming very close to the nest. On the appearance of any danger he exhibits much anxiety for his family.

The eggs are sat upon by the end of May or the beginning of June. They are generally six or seven in number, but as many as nine have been found: they are of a dull white colour.

The young appear, like so many other kindred kinds, to grow very rapidly. They are led to the water by the dam almost as soon as hatched, and her partner then joins them, and brings up the rear. 'The little family remain together till the return of the flock, when all mix promiscuously, recruit themselves for a few days, and then depart.' The female sits very close, and rarely leaves the nest. The pair are believed to unite for life.

Male; weight, about nine pounds. The largest of the two mentioned above as having been shot in Yorkshire, weighed ten pounds and a half. Length, three feet five or six inches; bill, black; iris, very dark brown. Head on the crown, black, with purple reflections; neck behind, black, tinged with purple; chin and throat, white, which colour extends upwards and backwards, somewhat after the fashion of a cravat, whence one of the names of the bird. It reaches nearly to the other side of the top of the neck; breast above, pale greyish brown; below, white; on the sides pale brown, the edges of the feathers still paler; back above, brown; below, dusky black.

Greater and lesser wing coverts, brown, the edges paler; primaries, dusky black; secondaries, brown, with lighter coloured edges; tertiaries, also brown; the edges of a lighter colour. Tail, dusky black; upper tail coverts, white; legs, toes, and webs, dark lead-colour or bluish black.

These birds begin to moult in July.

The females are somewhat less in size than the males.

HOOPER.

WILD SWAN. ELK. WHISTLING SWAN.

Cygnus ferus,	FLEMING. SELBY.
Anas cygnus,	PENNANT.
" *ferus*,	MONTAGU.

Cygnus—A Swan. *Ferus*—Wild, savage.

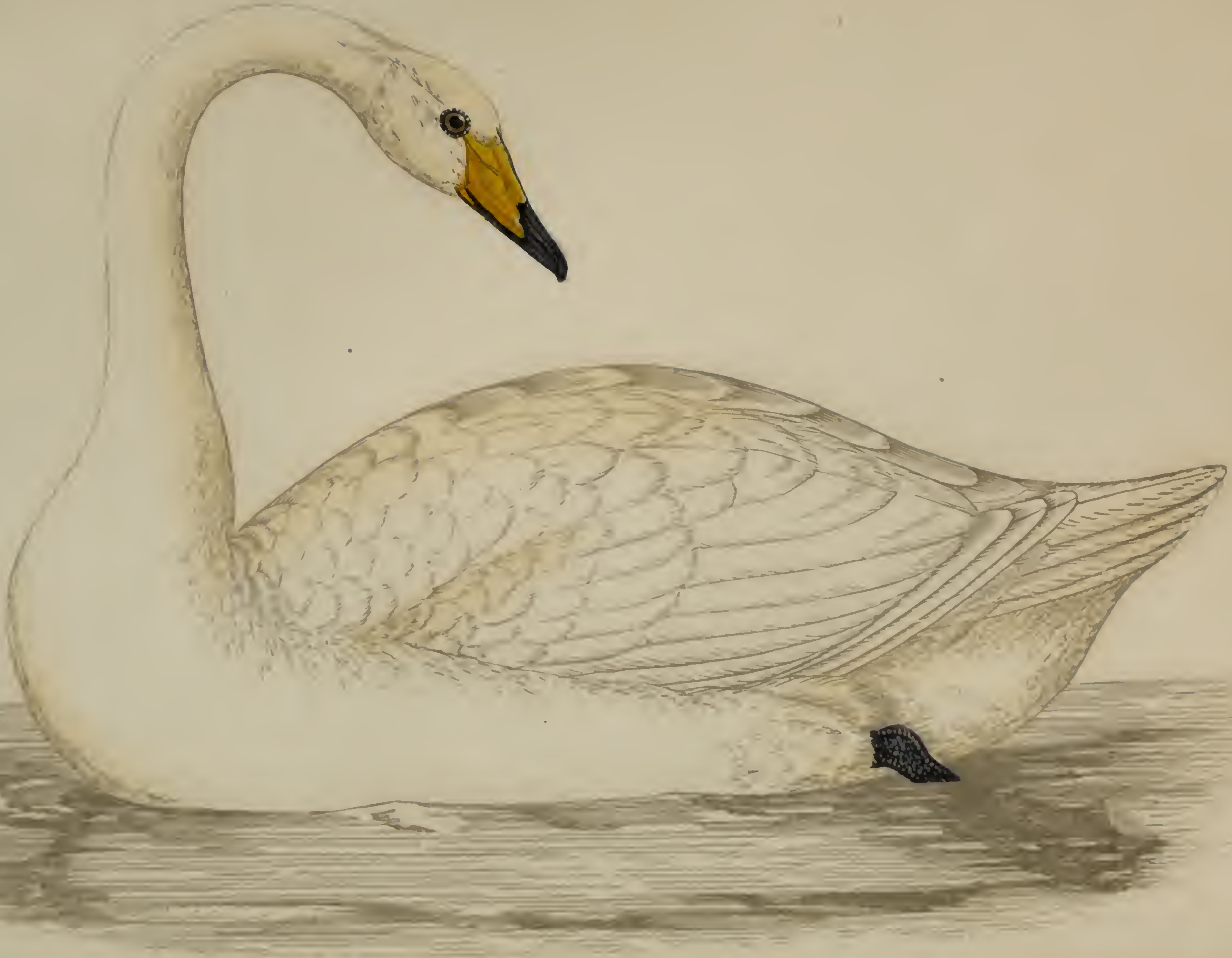
THE Hooper visits Prussia, Turkey, Greece, Hungary, Poland, France, Holland, and Italy; occasionally seen also in different parts of Germany, particularly, it is said, in Westphalia, Saxony, Dessau, and Worlitz, from Iceland, Norway, Lapland, Sweden, Denmark, Spitzbergen, and Russia in Europe; in Asia, it occurs in Siberia, Kamtschatka, and Tartary, the regions that border on the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea, Japan, Syria, Persia, and China. It is also said to be found in America, from Hudson's Bay through the United States to Mexico. It appears likewise that it travels as far as Africa, to Egypt and Barbary.

In the Orkneys, some used, according to the Rev. G. Low, in his Natural History of those Islands, to abide throughout the year; and a few pairs build on the Loch of Stenness, but in autumn large flocks arrive from the north, and of these part remain all the winter, and others cross over to Scotland—Sutherlandshire, Caithnesshire, Forfarshire, and the other northern counties, and thence penetrate according as the season impels them even to the southern shores of Sussex and Hampshire.

In the Hebrides, Shetland, and Faroe Islands, these birds also have occurred.

In Yorkshire they have been shot near Doncaster, Sheffield, Barnsley, Leeds, and Sutton-on-Derwent; they are far from uncommon in hard winters.

A flock of five appeared in January, 1855, between the



HOOPER.

village of Cookham and Maidenhead, Berkshire, and two of them were shot, as Mr. Thomas Wilmot has sent me word; and according to the information of the Hon. T. L. Powys, they have occurred in Northamptonshire. In Cambridgeshire it is not uncommon in severe winters in Whittlesea Wash, the old 'Squattlesea Mere' of Roger Wildrake, and some were met with near Wisbeach, on the River Nene, in the middle of December, 1849. In Oxfordshire a flock of fifteen, one of which was shot alighted in the garden of the Vicarage at Weston-on-the-Green, on the 6th. of February, 1838. In Derbyshire flocks occur on the Trent near Melbourne, and other places at intervals in the winter. In the year 1848 many were seen, and not a few killed, in Kent, near Gravesend; others also near the Thames above London, beyond Richmond, in Surrey, and near Chertsey.

They naturally frequent swamps and lakes, but especially in winter, such as are near the sea, and the shore and the sea itself.

In Norfolk they are not unfrequent about the coast in winter, especially in severe seasons. This remark indeed applies to the country generally. Thus in the winters of 1784-5, 1788-9, 1813, 1814, 1819, 1823, and 1829, they were more than ordinarily numerous.

In Scotland these Swans have been shot by the Nith and the Annan, in Dumfriesshire; and in Selkirkshire.

In Ireland they occasionally appear.

They migrate, according to the season, in March or April, and October, northwards in the former months, and southwards in the latter one.

They appear not to be shy until they have been alarmed by being shot at, and are quite tameable. Mr. Yarrell writes, speaking of some which bred in the gardens of the Zoological Society, in the summer of 1839, and again in 1842,—'A curious occurrence took place in reference to the brood of 1839. The Cygnets, when only a few days old, were sunning themselves on the margin of one of the islands, close to the deep water. The parent birds were swimming near. A Carrion Crow made a descent, and struck at one of the Cygnets, the old male Hooper came to the rescue in an instant, seized the Crow with his beak, pulled him into the water, and in spite of all his buffetings and resistance, held him there till he was dead.'

In the severe winter of 1838, several Swans were found dead in Orkney, apparently from the extreme cold.

Great numbers of these birds are killed in Iceland for the sake of the down and feathers, so very valuable in an Arctic climate. They are ridden and run down with horses and dogs in the autumn, when, being moulting, they are not so well able to fly.

The following account, given in the 'Zoologist, volume vi., pages 2024-5-6, by Miss Ellen Webley Parry, shews how even a bird, whose very name means wild or savage, may be tamed in the most perfect manner by kindness:—'The winter of 1829-30 was remarkably severe, and especially so for South Wales, where the climate is generally mild and humid. There had been numerous flocks of Wild Geese and other northern birds, including the Hooper, or Wild Swan, on the River Tivy and its tributary streams. A pair of these birds were shot and secured by the Rev. Samuel B. Shireff, of Stradmoor, Cardiganshire, whose residence was on the banks of that river. The male bird was merely wounded in the pinion, the female unfortunately too severely so to survive. Mr. Shireff presented the other to my father, the late Rear-Admiral Webley Parry, of Noyadd Trefann, in the same county, in the hope that he might be sufficiently tamed to put on a piece of ornamental water near the house.

The extreme wildness and fierceness of this bird, if approached, was remarkable, flying at every person who came near his domicile. We placed him in a small yard, with an open shed for him to retire to. It was many days before we could induce him to eat anything; as we were quite ignorant of his natural food we feared he would be starved to death, but fortunately he began to eat sea-biscuit soaked in water, which he continued to live upon for some months. After being kept in this place for more than two months, and being, as we thought, tolerably tame, we put him on the piece of water before named; but no sooner was he on his native element, than all his natural wildness seemed to return; he made his way down to a stream which ran into the Tivy, on which river he was caught, making his way towards the sea, and brought back again.

Shortly after this, an accident happening to the embankment, the piece of water became dry, and 'Dan,' as he was called, was brought up to the house, and had to content himself in the circumscribed limits of the stable and poultry yards, together with the farm-yard pond. From the number of people constantly passing and repassing there, and his long sojourn, he became excessively tame, went to bed with the poultry, came when called, would follow us about, and knew his way about the premises as well as the dogs. After a while he returned to his old quarters, and from that time until his death never but once attempted to escape, though he would occasionally take a flight round the water, and alight again; at the time alluded to, he would doubtless have returned, but in his flight he alighted at a farm not far from Noyadd, when he was immediately caught and shut up, and notice sent to us of his capture. I went to fetch him, knowing he would follow me, and on my way saw him being driven home by a boy; but no sooner did he catch sight of me, than he commenced half-running half-flying towards me, and making that remarkable trumpet-sound he was in the habit of doing when pleased; and walked the remainder of the distance by my side.

He knew all the servants and labourers, never molesting them; whilst every stranger, whether gentle or simple, equestrian or pedestrian, he invariably attacked if he could, especially any ragged person; he was rather the terror of our visitors, as he would frequently, like a watch-dog, dispute the entrance with them. He knew every member of the family at a considerable distance, whether on foot or on horseback, and would frequently leave the water to come and meet us, or walk by our side, talking all the time. He was lord of his own domain, and especially jealous of any animal approaching its banks, generally taking the trouble to swim from the farthest end to drive them away. He was so well known by cows and horses, that they generally decamped on his approach.

In the spring of the year he required little or no feeding, finding sufficient sustenance on the tadpoles and other water animals abundant at that season; he would eat any kind of grain, and was particularly fond of bread, which he would take out of our hands: he was as sociable as a dog, and nearly as attached. Whenever the entrance gate was left open, he would make his way up to the house; he always found out which room we were sitting in, and would call under the windows and peep in, and would not be satisfied without having something given him; he would then lie down under them, seeming satisfied if he could be near us. In the summer time, when the doors were open, he would frequently walk into the house, and even round the breakfast table. Often when my mother was amusing herself at her flower-beds, he would see her, come up from the water, wait at the gate to be let in, and then come up and lie down close to her. Never so happy as when near us, he would sit under the windows or on the steps for hours, if allowed, and each year increased his attachment and sagacity.

After being with us for upwards of six years, to our great distress, on coming down to breakfast one morning, we discovered poor Dan standing upon the steps of the front door, with his head and neck covered with blood, the skin under his lower mandible being torn from the bone and hanging down, as was his tongue from having nothing to support it. The first thing we thought of was to sew the skin on again, in the hope of its adhering to the bone; but neither this nor other endeavours to effect a cure succeeded, and the poor bird was in danger of being starved to death, as he had not the power of swallowing, even if he got the food into his mouth, having no use of his tongue. We were very loath to sign his death-warrant, and yet could think of no means of saving him; when one of the servants proposed the carpenter's making a wooden bill for him; we acted on the suggestion, and had one made with holes drilled in it, and corresponding ones through the horny substance of his mandible, and fastened it on with wire. This contrivance answered admirably; he was able to eat as usual, and began to recover his good looks; but nothing would induce him from the time of his accident to remain on the water at night; he always came up to the house towards evening to go to rest, and was most persevering in his endeavours to obtain an entrance into his bed-place, and if he failed one way he would try another. Occasionally he would call under our sitting-room windows to be let in. In the morning he quietly marched down to the water, quite contentedly. What caused the accident we could never discover, and can only suppose it to have been done by a stoat or polecat, as he had been seen more than once attacking the former, which were very numerous.

The wooden bill answered admirably well for two or three months, when the wire by which it was fastened became corroded, and it dropped off; it had unfortunately been secured with brass or steel wire, instead of gold or silver; had it been done with either of the latter, in all probability poor Dan might yet have been alive, if not to tell his tale, to have shewn his wonderful cure; but as it was, we did not like putting him again to the pain of drilling fresh holes in his mandible, as the old ones were worn through; and though we kept him many days, in hopes that he might get accustomed to the loss of his false bill, and be able to feed himself, we found him totally unable to do so. As he was getting weaker and weaker, from want of sustenance, we were most reluctantly obliged to destroy this attached and sagacious creature, having had him nearly seven years.'

The Swan was, I believe, formerly considered as a royal dish, but it is not now much esteemed for the table.

They fly in a long line, at times divaricated in the form of a wedge, and go in flocks or teams of from four or five to thirty, which unite together to the number of several hundreds, at the times of migration. Their flight is easy and well sustained, and usually conducted at a great height. It is exercised without much noise, except on first rising or alighting, when the sound may be heard to a considerable distance. It is said that they can fly at the rate of above one hundred miles an hour. They walk well, and can also run with considerable rapidity. In swimming about, except when feeding, the neck is carried in an upright posture, and seldom in the arched manner characteristic of the other species. In walking the neck is bent backwards over the body, and the head lowered as if to preserve a proper balance.

They feed on vegetable food of different kinds, the stems, leaves, and roots of plants; grain and fruit, also insects and their larvæ, young fish, frogs, and worms. 'The manner of feeding in this species is peculiar; it not only seeks for its food by preference in shallow water, but it turns up the boggy ground, in order to obtain roots and worms; to such an extent is this done, that where a number of these birds congregate, the ground is perfectly broken up. The grain before-named consists of barley especially, and oats; and the fruit, plums in particular.'

The note resembles the word 'hoop,' repeated ten or a dozen times; hence the name of the bird. It is both loud, clear, and sonorous, and sounds aloft like the clang of a trumpet. Other inflections of their voice are expressed by Meyer, by the syllables 'hang, hang,' 'grou, grou,' and 'killelee.' Montagu writes that having killed one of this species out of a flock of ten or twelve, its companions flew round several times, making a most melancholy cry before they flew off. 'This,' he says, 'puts us in mind of the solemn dirge of the dying Swan, described by the ancient poets, and may possibly have given rise to those accounts only by them it is made to be sung by the dying bird.' This, however, as Aristotle says, 'makes not a little but the whole difference,' and no such conclusion is therefore to be drawn from it.

The nest, which is of large size, as might naturally be looked for, is made of reeds, rushes, and other water-plants, and is lined with down, with which the eggs are also covered. It is about a foot and a half in diameter, and is placed not far from the water. It is begun to be made about the middle of March, and is built on the ground in marshy places.

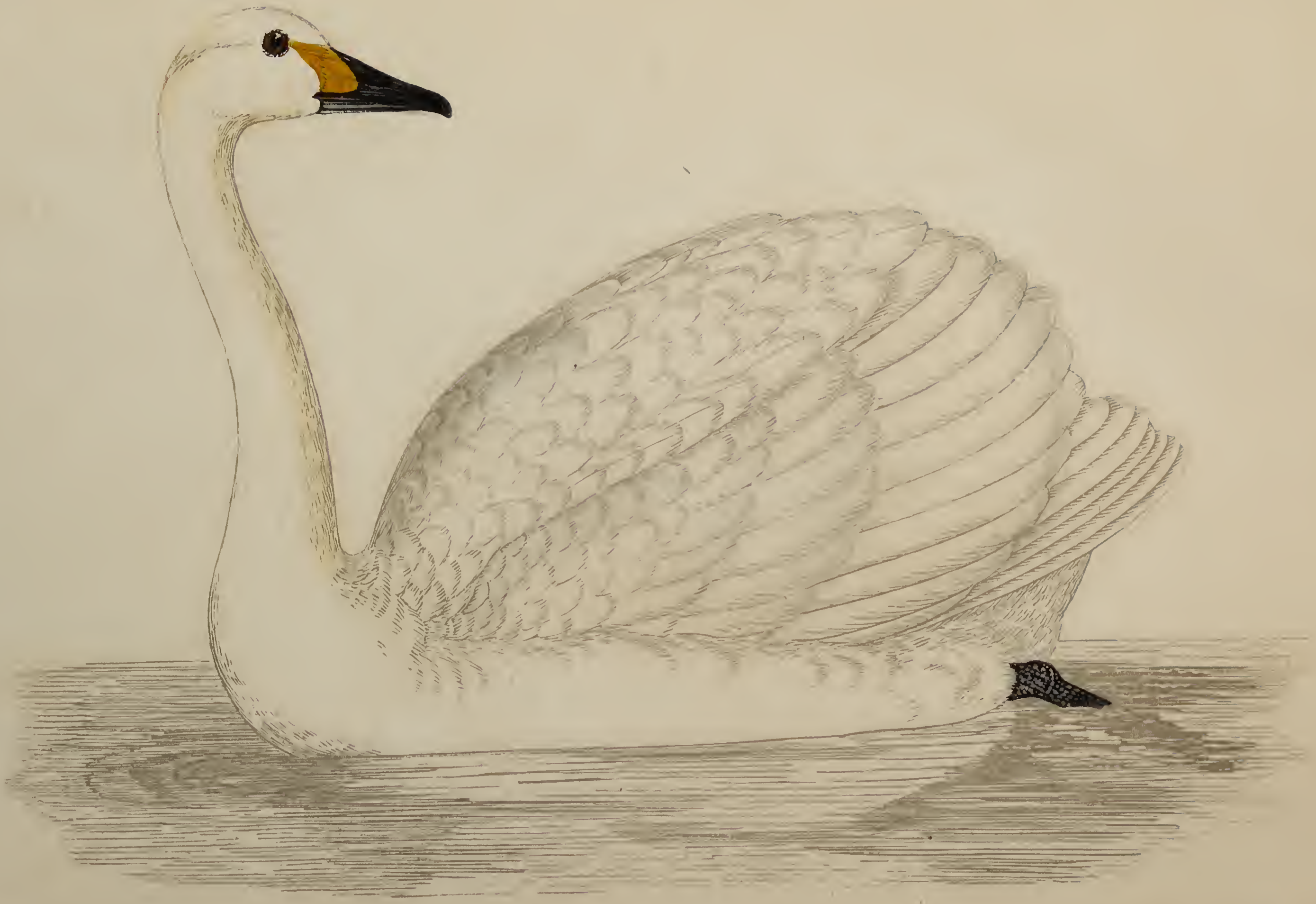
The eggs are of a pale dull brownish white or pale greenish white colour. They vary in number from five to seven.

The female sits for forty-two days. She and her mate are united, it is said, for life. They keep the place of their nest free from intrusion, and resolutely repel its appropriation by any but themselves.

'No birds,' says Colonel Hawker, 'vary more in weight than Hoopers. In the last winter, 1838, I killed them from thirteen to twenty-one pounds.' No doubt, however he confounded this species with the Bewick's Swan. Some weigh twenty-four pounds. Length, four feet ten inches to five feet; the bill is black on the edges and the fore part slanting upwards and backwards, the remainder, up to and round the eye, orange yellow. It is without the knob seen in the other species. Iris, brown; the head and upper part of the neck are generally like the rest of the plumage—pure white, but often of a fine rufous yellow colour, otherwise the crown, neck, nape, chin, throat, breast, back, wings, which expand to the width of from seven to eight feet, greater and lesser wing coverts, primaries, secondaries, tertiaries, greater and lesser under wing coverts, tail, upper and under tail coverts, are pure white. Legs and toes, greyish black; webs, greyish black.

The young, which are not fully fledged for three months, at first have the bill pale dull yellowish red, the tip and the edges of the sides black. Head, crown, neck, and nape, pale greyish brown; chin, throat, and breast above, pale greyish brown; the latter on the lowest part paler. The legs are, at first, pale yellowish grey red.

At the moult at the end of their first year they begin to assume the white plumage, which is complete by the same period the following year.



BEWICK'S SWAN.

BEWICK'S SWAN.

Cygnus Bewickii,	Yarrell. Selby.
" "	Jenyns. Eyton. Gould.

Cygnus—A Swan. *Bewickii*—Of Bewick.

The Swan thus denominated in honour of Bewick, our own Bewick, whose name must ever be associated with 'British Birds,' appears to be distributed over the northern parts of Europe, Asia, and America, and the islands of the Arctic Ocean. Temminck says that it breeds in Iceland and Siberia.

In Yorkshire, Edward Dawson, Esq., son of my friend, G. P. Dawson, Esq., of Osgodby Hall, near Selby, has informed me of his having shot three of these birds at a shot on Skipwith Common, about the 14th. of February, 1855. There was a flock of five, the other two were the old birds. One was shot near Bawtry; several have occurred at different times near Burlington.

In Cambridgeshire, so J. R. Little, Esq., of St. John's College, has written me word, a flock of twenty was seen on Whittlesea Wash, about the middle of March, 1855, of which three were shot. A few near Wisbeach, on the estuary of the Nene, in the middle of December, 1849. In the county of Durham, one was shot near Stockton-on-Tees, in the winter of 1850. Six are said to have been seen in January, 1830, near St. Just, in Cornwall. In March, 1845, three were shot near Somersham, and three near Godmanchester, in the county of Huntingdon. In Norfolk they are not unfrequent in the neighbourhood of the sea, in winter. In Oxfordshire two near Oxford, in the winter of 1837-8. In Derbyshire a flock of eleven appeared on the Trent, near Melbourne, in February, 1845, and two of them were shot. In Lancashire a flock of twenty-nine, one of which was shot at Middleton, were observed at Crumpsall, near Manchester, on the 10th. of December, 1829; and again, seventy-three at the same place, on the 28th. of February, 1830. The bird just mentioned, being only slightly wounded, was kept alive, and on the 23rd. of March, another, a male, no doubt the same one that had been observed to remain with it at first, for some hours, after the rest of the flock had gone off, made its appearance, and after flying round and round for some time, descended to it with much apparent joy. It remained with it, and soon became accustomed to the presence of strangers, but, on the 13th. of April, being alarmed by some dogs, took flight and did not return; and, on the 5th. of September, the female, whose wing had by that time become sound again, also disappeared, and was seen no more.

In Ireland this Swan has been noticed pretty commonly. Several flocks were seen in January, 1836. In February, 1830, a flock of seven alighted in a field near Belfast, and two of them were secured. One was obtained in Wexford Harbour, on the 1st. of February, 1844.

In Scotland it is not uncommon in Sutherlandshire on the lochs.

They migrate southwards in October, and retire northwards again in March.

In their natural state they appear to be shy and timid, but they are, nevertheless, easily susceptible of a certain degree of domestication; they are gentle in their manners, and live amicably with other kinds.

They feed on insects and their larvæ, seeds, the roots, stems, and leaves of water-plants, and worms, and swallow therewith some gravel. They wade for their food in shallow waters, immersing the head and neck for the purpose.

Their call is loud and clamorous—a deep whistle, heard at a considerable distance.

The nest is reported by Captain Lyons, R.N., to be built of peat-moss, and to be nearly as much as six feet long, four feet and three quarters wide, and two feet high on the outside, the hollow one foot and a half across. Another account says that the materials used are flags, rushes, and the small boughs of willow trees; doubtless those most readily procurable are differently made use of in different places.

The eggs are of a cream white colour.

This Swan too is said to occupy six weeks in the incubation of its eggs. Many pairs build in the same vicinity, but each pair maintain the right of private property for the time being in their own more immediate abode.

Male; length, three feet ten inches to four feet; bill, black, except only the inner portion of the upper mandible extending back to the eye, which is orange yellow: in old birds a knob arises at the base. Iris, dark chesnut. The yellowish rust-colour on the head and neck appears in some individuals of this species also. Otherwise the head, crown, neck, nape, chin, throat, breast, and back, are white.

The wings reach in expanse to the width of from six feet to six feet three inches: the second and third feathers are longer than the first and the fourth. Greater and lesser wing coverts, primaries, secondaries, tertiaries, greater and lesser under wing coverts, tail, of twenty feathers, wedge-shaped, and the tail coverts, white. Legs and toes, dull black; webs, dull black.

The young, the first year, are greyish brown. In the second year, the bill is pale yellow over the base; iris, orange. The head and the breast are much tinged with red rust-colour; on the latter it wears off soonest. The young, according to Yarrell, have only eighteen feathers in the tail, and Selby gives this number to the adult; the point might therefore be considered as 'adhuc sub judice,' but the former statement seems the correct one.

MUTE SWAN.

TAME SWAN. DOMESTIC SWAN.

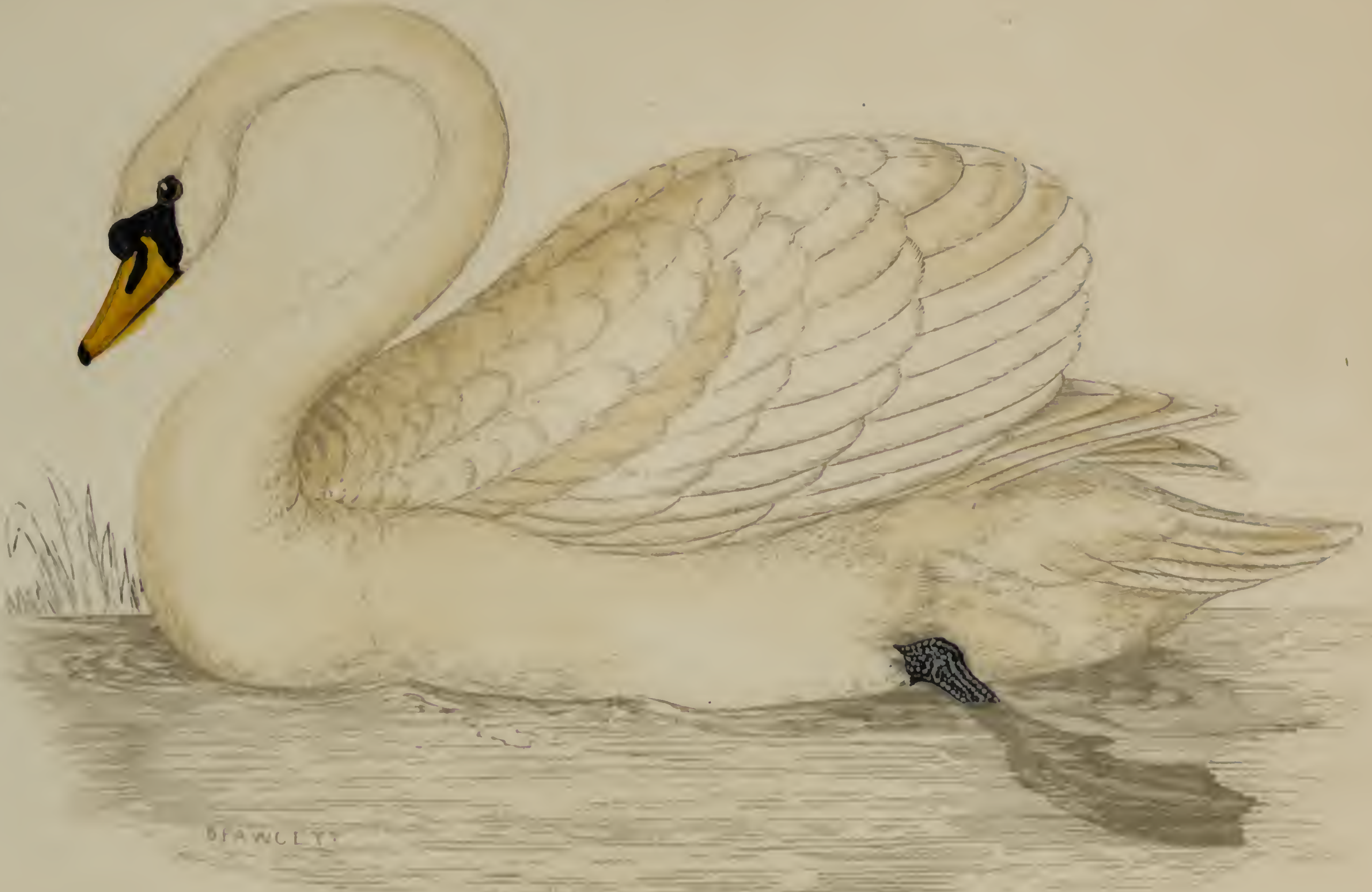
Cygnus mansuetus,	GOULD.
" *olor,*	JENYNS.
Anas olor,	PENNANT. BEWICK.

Cygnus—A Swan. *Mansuetus*—Accustomed.

THOUGH this species is that which we only see preserved as an ornament on the lakes, rivers, and ponds of the nobility and gentry of the country, and is not now known in a wild state, yet as there is no reason why it should have been imported for the purpose more than any of the others, and from the latter, commonly met with as they are, one would more naturally look for the supply to be obtained, it seems to me that the fact of its being now found as it is, ought to be accounted for by the probable supposition that wild birds obtained in this country were the original source of the present race; on this account, therefore, rather than because its establishment in the kingdom has become 'un fait accompli,' I consider that it has a fair title to the place which it holds as a British bird.

It is found in the wild state in Europe—in Russia and the southern parts of Scandinavia generally, Prussia, Lithuania, Poland, Hungary, Germany, Holland, France, and Italy; in Asia—in Siberia, Persia, and the countries between the Black and the Caspian Seas.

Water is their element, whether that of the sea, the river, the lake, or the pond. If frozen out, they are obliged to take 'ton deuteron ploun,' and keep in the neighbourhood, or by any springs, if such there be, that have withstood the frost.



MUTE SWAN.

There are Swanneries of greater or less size in various parts of England, and in numberless places a pair of these noble, stately, and graceful birds are to be seen. As many as forty are mentioned by Mr. Knapp, the author of the 'Journal of a Naturalist,' as having been counted by him on a Swan-pool that then existed, but no longer exists, near Lincoln; and twice that number might recently be seen on the Swannery of Lord Ilchester, at Abbotsbury, in Dorsetshire.

In their wild state they are shy, but, as is expressed by their duplicate names, and also well known, are thoroughly tameable, so as to come when invited and take food from any one accustomed to give it to them, or even from strangers, when used, if so I may express myself, to the sight of them.

Bewick writes, 'At the setting in of frosty weather, the Wild Swans are said to associate in large flocks, and thus united, to use every effort to prevent the water from freezing: this they accomplish by the continual stir kept up among them; and by constantly dashing it with their extended wings, they are enabled to remain as long as it suits their convenience, in some favourite part of the lake or river, which abounds with their food. The Swan is very properly entitled the peaceful Monarch of the Lake: conscious of his superior strength, he fears no enemy, nor suffers any bird, however powerful, to molest him; neither does he prey upon any one. His vigorous wing is as a shield against the attacks even of an Eagle, and the blows from it are said to be so powerful, as to stun or kill the fiercest of his foes. The wolf or the fox may surprise him in the dark, but their efforts are vain in the day.'

Part of the above statement is, however, to be taken 'cum grano salis,' for while engaged with their young, and in guardianship of them, Swans are full of spirit, and their great strength makes them powerful and dangerous foes, to man, dog, or other supposed enemy. It has been said that a fair blow of the wing will break a man's leg. Meyer mentions one which he knew attack a man with great fury, and fracture his arm with one stroke. When different pairs of Swans, with their families, are on the same piece of water, each keeps within the limits of their own district, and resist any encroachment by the others.

The old birds associate with their young through the winter, but drive them away in the spring. Swans have been known to live fifty years. The male bird swims higher out of the water than the female.

The noise made by the sounding pinions of these great birds, may be heard at a long distance. They fly in a straight line, and at the height of three or four hundred feet, that is the wild birds; the tame ones only attain to a much lower elevation. They walk in an ungainly manner, and evidently are not at home on the dry land. Every one must have observed the elegant manner in which the Common Swan arches up its wings when sailing about on the water; and it seems, so I am told, that the attitude is peculiar to it, and is not exhibited by the wild species.

They feed on water-plants, their roots and leaves, insects and their larvæ, and occasionally swallow fish. They take some water each time that they browse.

The Swan has obtained the character, contradicted by its name, as well as, except in some very small degree, by fact, of being a bird of song. It has especially had assigned to it the office of singing before it dies, a dirge at its own departure, the echoes of which die away over the form that has then ceased to utter it. Some saturnine epigrammatist thus turned the idea into a medium of satire—

'Swans sing before they die—
Methinks, 't were no bad thing,
Would certain persons die before they sing.'

The usual note is rendered, by Meyer, by the words 'maul, maul.' The Swan has, however, a low, soft, and not unmusical voice, formed of two notes, uttered in the spring and summer, when engaged with its young. Colonel Hawker has printed a few bars of it in stave: the bird kept nodding with its head, as if pleased with its own music, or beating time to it.

The Swan disposes its nest on the ground near the water side, or on some mound on an island in the river or lake. It is made of rushes and flags, and if the water threatens to rise, more materials, which the male bird brings and the female works in, are added to the deposit under the eggs, which are thus gradually raised further out of danger.

The following appeared in the 'Nottingham Journal,' in 1844:—'We are informed, upon undoubted authority, that the Swans (which usually build upon the ground,) have this year invariably raised their nests to the height of two yards and upwards; a similar fact is observable with respect to Water

Hens. This is by some persons deemed an omen of a very deep summer flood.'

Yarrell relates the following similar account of one of these birds, as given to him by Lord Braybrooke. 'This Swan was eighteen or nineteen years old, had brought up many broods, and was highly valued in the neighbourhood. She exhibited, some eight or nine years past, one of the most remarkable instances of the powers of instinct that was ever recorded. She was sitting on four or five eggs, and was observed to be very busy in collecting weeds, grasses, etc., to raise her nest; a farming man was ordered to take down half a load of haulm, with which she most industriously raised her nest and the eggs two feet and a half: that very night there came down a tremendous fall of rain, which flooded all the malthouses and did much damage. Man made no preparation, the bird did. Instinct prevailed over reason; her eggs were above, and only just above, the water.'

The ordinary number of eggs laid by this Swan is from two to four, sometimes five, occasionally six, and not very rarely eight. In one instance as many as nine were laid, and all of them successfully hatched, in the Jephson Gardens, Leamington. It is possible, however, that two birds may have made use of the same nest, and, if so, the one under whose care all came, proved no 'injusta noverca,' but tended all with the like attention. At Beddington Park, in Norfolk, twelve eggs were deposited, and the brood all reared, in 1850.

The nest of this Swan, when the first egg is laid, is small in size, but, as by degrees a larger family is expected, she adds to the size of it by clutching at every suitable material in its vicinity, and this even to a greater extent than appears to be, or indeed is, at all necessary. Instinct suggests this for a wise purpose; but where reason would say 'hold, enough,' the former displays its inferiority by not knowing where to stop.

The eggs are from five or six to seven or eight in number, older birds laying the larger, and younger the fewer numbers respectively. They are of a dull greenish white colour.

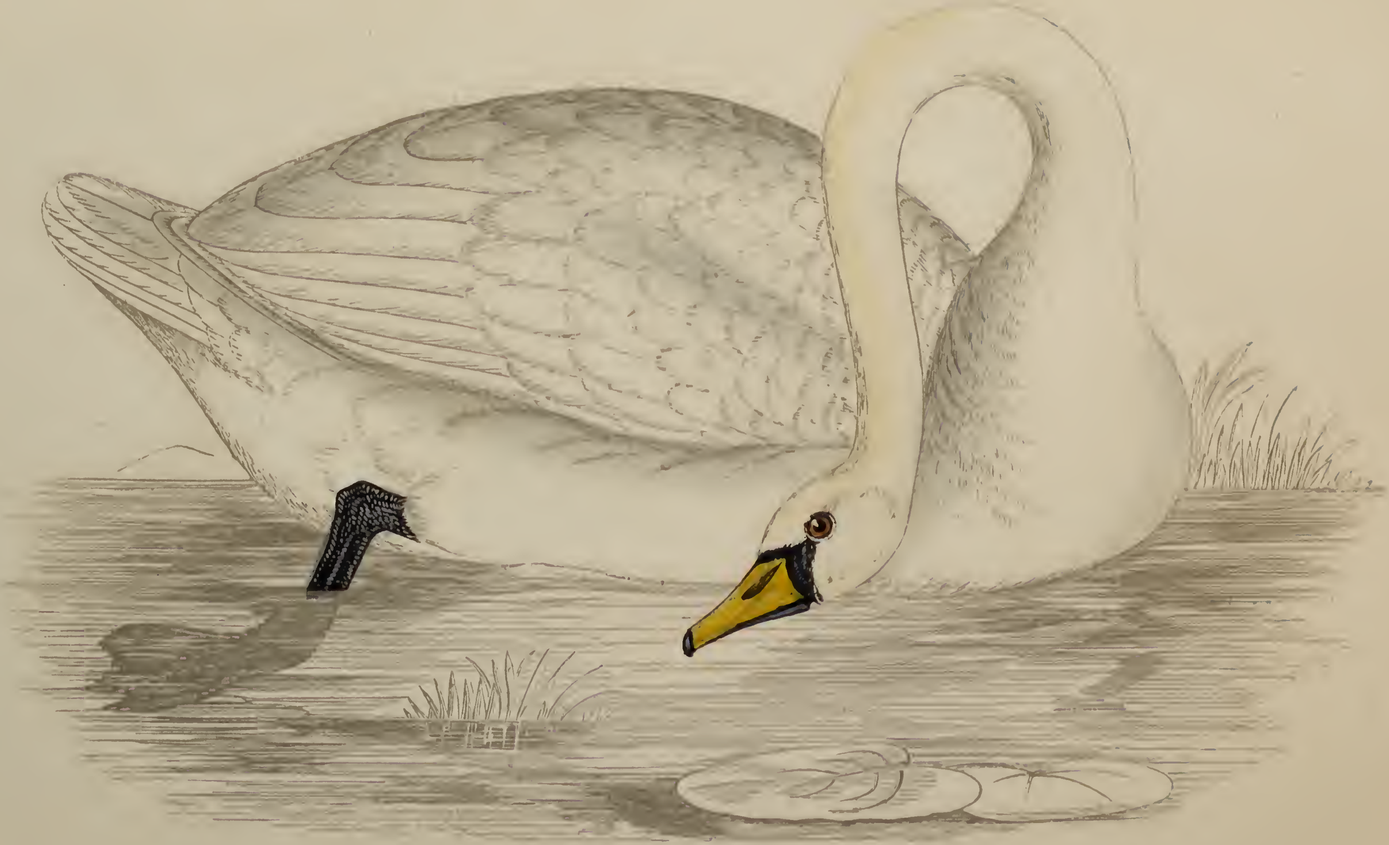
Incubation continues for from five to six weeks. After being hatched for one day, they follow the guidance of their parents to the water, and have but little instruction, beyond that instinctively given by nature, in the art of swimming about and feeding themselves. Still, 'The attention,' says Meyer, 'bestowed by the old birds upon the young is incessant;

and when fatigued by the strength of the stream, or requiring to be removed to a far distance, too great for their young capacity, the hen bird takes the young ones on her back, which she accomplishes by lowering herself a little in the water, and occasionally assisting them to ascend with her foot, and in this manner they are carried in safety to some more desirable spot. The shape of the Swan's back, which is very flat, is well adapted for this purpose; and when her wings are raised, the young ones repose in the most beautiful and safe cradle imaginable.'

Male; weight, about thirty pounds; length, from four feet eight inches to five feet; bill, rich reddish orange, with the exception of the tooth, the edges, the base, and the knob, which are black, and which colour reaches back to the eyes; iris, dark brown. Head, crown, neck, nape, chin, throat, breast, and back, all white. Greater and lesser wing coverts, primaries, secondaries, tertiaries, greater and lesser under wing coverts, tail and tail coverts, also white. Legs and toes, black; webs, black.

The female is smaller and slighter in make; the knob at the base of the bill is also not so large.

The young are at first of a dark dull bluish grey colour; bill, at first lead-colour, then becoming lightish slate-colour, with a tinge of green. The chin, throat, and breast, are paler than the back. By the end of the second summer, they have already done with the grey livery, and when two years old are completely white.



POLISH SWAN.

POLISH SWAN.

Cygnus immutabilis, YARRELL.

Cygnus—A Swan. *Immutabilis*—Unchangeable.

SEVERAL flocks of these birds were observed in this country in the beginning of the year 1838, during the severe weather of that period. Of a flight of thirty, seen near Snodland, on the Medway, in Kent, four were shot. One was procured in Cambridgeshire, in the winter of 1840-41. In the summer of the year 1844, Arthur Strickland, Esq. saw a flock off Burlington Harbour. They were all white, and one of them being obtained, and proving to be a young bird, its identity with the changeless Swan is at once apparent.

One was shot in the marshes near Horning, Norfolk, Mr. M. C. Cooke informs me, on the 29th. of January, 1854. Thirteen were seen at Ingoldisthorpe, near Lynn, and one of them was shot, in December, 1851. Three are recorded in the 'Naturalist,' vol. ii, page 132, as having been killed out of a flock of nine, at the same place about the same time. I conclude that they formed part of the same flock—All 'Polish Refugees,' and probably from Russia, the severity of whose climate has been only in keeping with her customs heretofore.

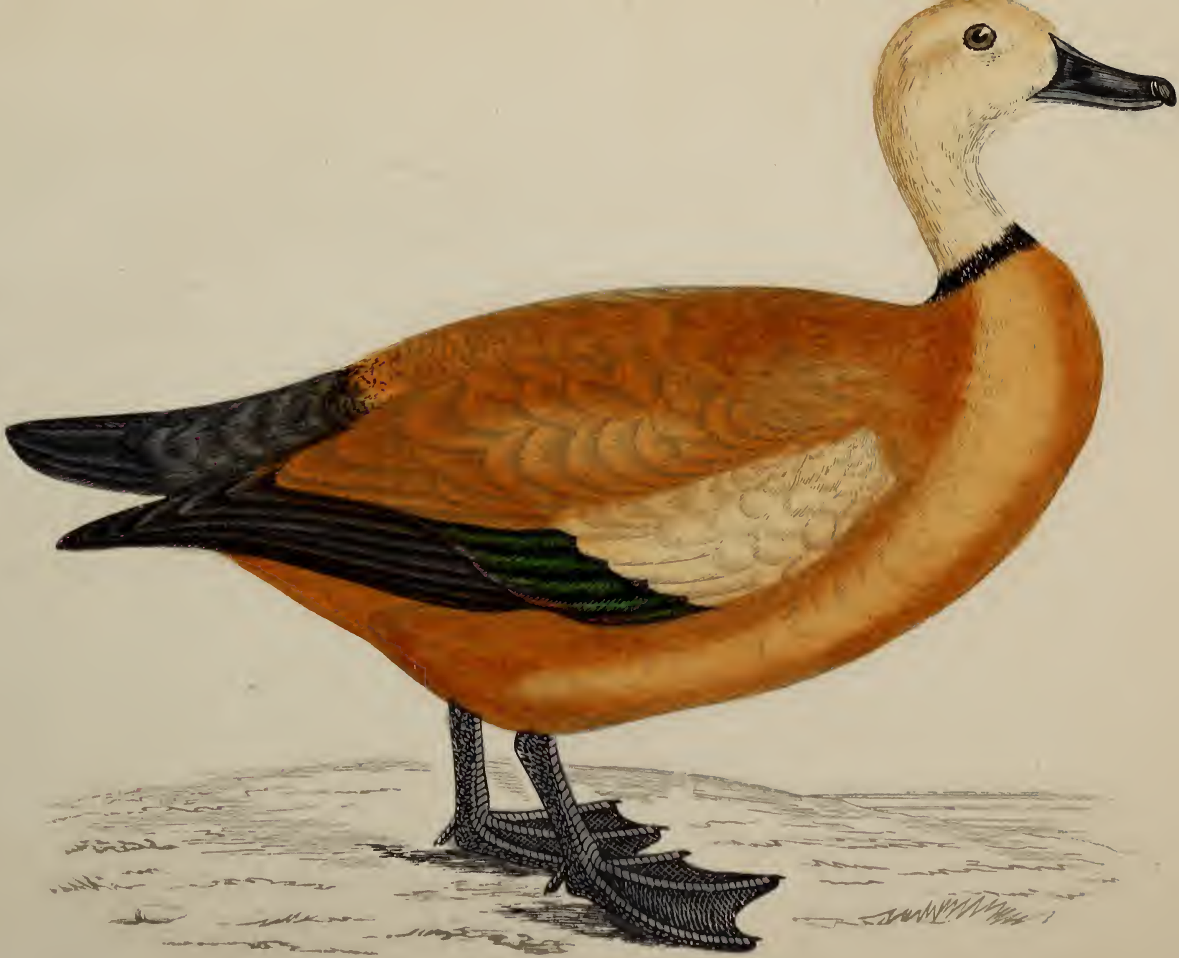
This species is also tameable, and in confinement has been known to pair with the Mute Swan.

Male; length, four feet nine inches. The knob at the base of the bill is small; the beak itself is reddish orange, except the base and the edges, which are black; the tooth also is black; iris, brown. Head, crown, neck, nape, chin, throat, breast, and back, pure white.

The wings have the second quill feather the longest. Greater and lesser wing coverts, primaries, secondaries, tertiaries, greater and lesser under wing coverts, tail, and tail coverts, pure unsullied white. Legs and toes, pale grey slate-colour; webs, pale grey slate-colour.

The young of this species are white from the first, and hence the specific name.

Since the foregoing article was sent to the press, I have received a letter from Arthur Strickland, Esq., in which he informs me that a German naturalist has published a pamphlet, to prove that the so-called Polish Swan is only an albino variety of the common species. I am unable at present, not having seen the work, to do more than record the circumstance of its publication, but it seems to me, 'as at present advised,' that the fact of the young having been procured in different instances in the white plumage, is sufficient, in connection with the other peculiarities mentioned by Yarrell, to constitute the present a distinct bird.



RUDDY SHIELDRAKE.

RUDDY SHIELDRAKE.

RUDDY GOOSE. COLLARED DUCK.

Tadorna rutila,	JENYNS. SELBY. GOULD.
Anas rutila,	BEWICK.

Tadorna—............? *Rutila*—Fiery red.

THE bird thus called advances from Denmark, through the south of Russia, to various parts of the east of Europe, and has been met with also in Germany, Hungary, Italy, Turkey, Greece, and Austria. It likewise appertains to Asia, having been found in Persia, Asia Minor, the Dukkun in India, and the neighbourhood of the Caucasian range. Great numbers have been seen on Lake Van, that beautiful water, which no one read the description of in Mr. Layard's 'Nineveh' without wishing that he 'might be there to see.' In Africa also they are said to be found, even to the Cape.

Several of these Shieldrakes have now been procured in this country.

Marmaduke Tunstall, Esq. possessed one which was believed to have been shot in the severe winter of 1776, at Bryanstone, near Blandford, Dorsetshire, the seat of Mr. Portman, ancestor of Lord Portman. A second was subsequently killed in the south of England, and a third at Iken, near Orford, in the county of Suffolk, in January, 1834.

In Ireland one was shot on the Murrogh of Wicklow, on the 7th. of July, 1847, by Mr. John Moreton.

In the Orkneys, one in Sanday, by Mr. Strang, in October, 1831.

The Ruddy Shieldrake appears to frequent the land more than the water.

These birds assemble in flocks, except when paired in the summer. The male and female seem much attached to each other.

They feed early in the morning, and again towards nightfall, in corn and stubble fields, resorting thither from the marshes, which they otherwise inhabit.

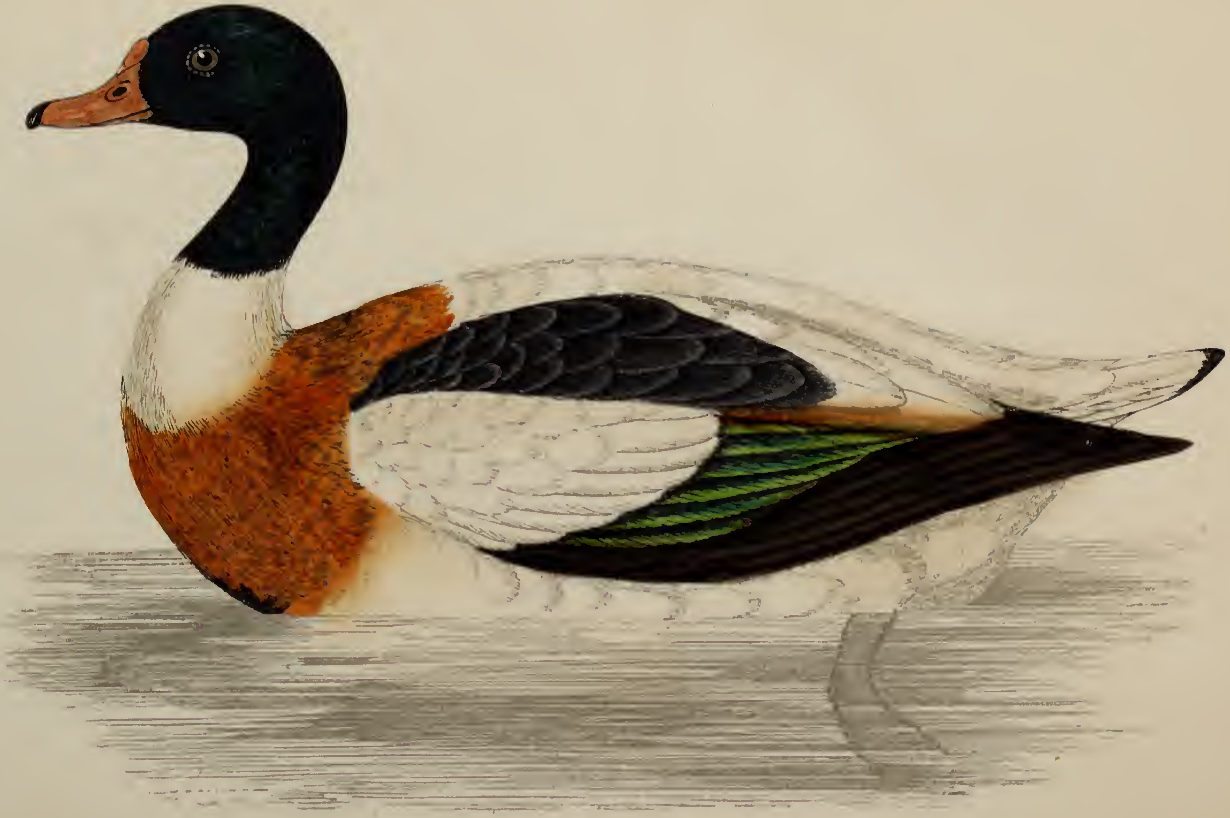
Yarrell says, 'The voice of the bird when flying is not unlike the tone of a clarionet; at other times it cries like a peacock, especially when kept confined; and now and then clucks like a hen.'

This bird builds its nest in holes in river banks, such as have been burrowed and deserted by animals, or those of natural formation. It is lined with feathers of the bird itself, the remainder being any sorts of stalks and sticks.

The eggs are white, and eight or nine or ten in number. They are highly polished.

Male; length, two feet two or three inches, to two feet four. The bill, which is red, is depressed in the middle part, and there is a raised knob at the base; iris, yellowish brown; head on the crown and sides, and neck on the back, buff colour, darkening towards the nape and all round, where it becomes almost orange brown, with the exception of a black colour, which encircles it round the middle; chin, buff colour; breast, orange brown; back, orange brown. Greater and lesser wing coverts, pale buff white; primaries, leaden grey—nearly black; secondaries, leaden grey, the speculum brilliant green; tertiaries, orange brown. Legs and toes, brownish grey; webs, brownish grey.

Female; head on the sides, white; on the crown and the neck, mouse grey; throat, white; breast, light ferruginous, paler below; back on the upper part, light ferruginous, on the lower part dark brown with a tinge of green. The wings have a blunt spur at the bend; greater and lesser wing coverts, white, forming a broad mark on the wing; primaries, brown, the edges darker: the secondaries exhibit a green speculum. Tail, dark brown with a tinge of green. Webs, black.



SHIELDRAKE.

SHIELDRAKE.

COMMON SHIELDRAKE. SHELDRAKE. SHELLDRAKE. SKELDRAKE. BURROW DUCK. SKELGOOSE. SKEELING GOOSE.

Tadorna Bellonii,	STEPHENS.
" *vulpanser,*	FLEMING.
Anas tadorna,	LINNÆUS. PENNANT.

Tadorna—............? *Bellonii*—Of Bellon.

THE Shieldrake is a bird of very wide dispersion. In Europe it is known in Sweden, where it breeds; also in Iceland, Norway, Germany, Italy, Spain, France, and Holland. In Asia, its range extends from Kamtschatka and the southern parts of Siberia to Persia, Tartary, China, and Japan. Bewick mentions that Captain Cook has noticed them at Van Diemen's Land, and that they have been seen in great numbers on the Falkland Islands.

This species is strictly a maritime one, though it has sometimes occurred inland; but such instances form the 'exception, not the rule.' It has been shot in Northamptonshire, the Hon. T. L. Powys has written me word, and he also mentions two killed near Oxford. In Cambridgeshire it used to be not uncommon. In Yorkshire, it has occurred near Doncaster, also near York, Driffield, and Thirsk, but rarely. Several have been found near Sutton-on-Derwent, where they have appeared in small flocks. They used to breed on the banks of the Humber. In Nottinghamshire, near Retford. In Northumberland, they build on the coast, where there is sand above high-water mark.

In Lincolnshire, the Rev. R. P. Alington informs me that the Shieldrake occurs on the sea-coast, near Summercoats, and breeds in a rabbit-warren on the sand-hills of the sea-bank in that parish. In Cornwall, it has been met with at Gwyllyn Vase and Swanpool, near Falmouth, but rarely In Oxfordshire, they occur in most years, in the neighbourhood of Weston-on-the-Green, as stated by the Revs. Andrew and Henry Matthews; likewise in Dorsetshire and Hampshire. In Norfolk they are not uncommon, and breed among the low sand-hills on the coast.

They occur in Ireland, and are indigenous, but rather rare; also on the shores of Scotland, quite to the north. In Orkney, too, they arrive early in the spring, and remain till the autumn, a few only staying throughout the winter.

Their proper home is the neighbourhood of the sea, but they are occasionally, and not very unfrequently, met with inland. They remain with us throughout the year, and always in pairs. They move southwards in the autumn, returning to the north in the spring; the former in September, and the latter in March.

A. E. Knox, Esq. mentions that a friend of his knew a brood of young Shieldrakes at Sandringham, in Norfolk, come from the rabbit-burrow in which they had been bred, at the whistle of the gamekeeper, to receive food. If the nest be approached by an unwelcome intruder, the young ones hide themselves: 'the tender mother drops at no great distance from her helpless brood, trails herself along the ground, flaps it with her wings, and appears to struggle as if she was wounded, in order to attract attention, and tempt a pursuit after her. Should these wily schemes, in which she is aided by her mate, succeed, they both return when the danger is over, to their terrified motionless little offspring, to renew the tender offices of cherishing and protecting them.' When however the young are older, they fly straight away from them, as if aware that by diving and otherwise they could then better take care of themselves, as indeed is the fact. The young broods collect together, it seems, in troops of from thirty to forty, accompanied by the old birds.

This species, though naturally extremely wild, is very readily brought into a state of domestication, and will come to a call. Some that have wandered away have returned even after an absence of several months. The richness of its well-contrasted plumage renders it a great ornament. They have been known to breed in the reclaimed state, but not often: one at Lord Derby's paired with a duck.

They walk in an easy and handsome way, with the neck bent in a graceful manner. They fly strongly and quickly, in a straight line. They dive well.

These birds feed on marine worms, sandhoppers, small shell-fish, the lesser crustacea, and the fry of fish, as also on grain and seeds when to be obtained in lieu of the former.

The note is a shrill whistle.

Incubation lasts about thirty days. These birds are believed to pair for life: they unite in the second year, when the complete plumage has been assumed.

The Shieldrake builds in rabbit-holes and other hollows in the earth, often as much as ten or twelve feet from the entrance. Some down plucked from their own breasts is the lining with which the nest is fitted, the remainder being dry grass.

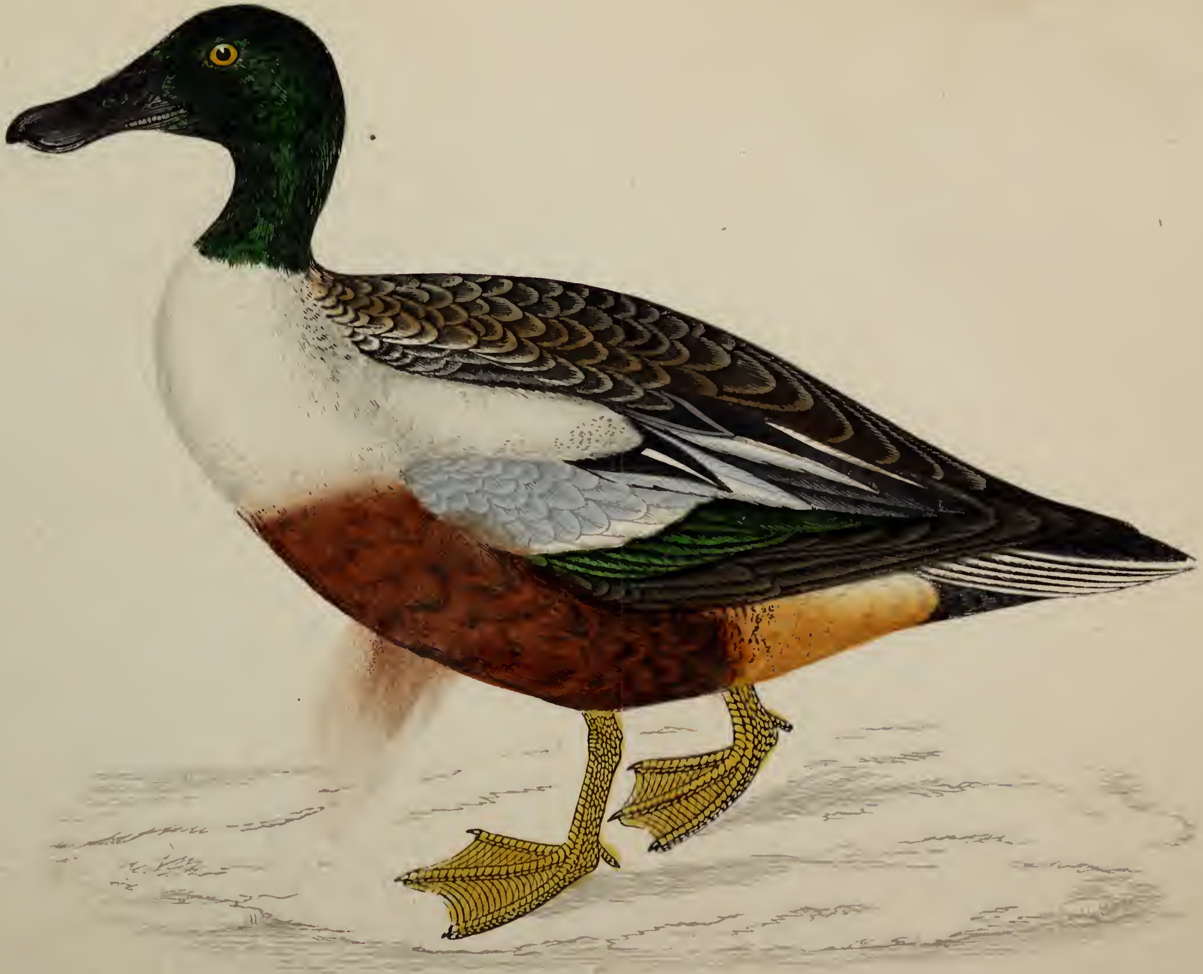
The eggs are ten or twelve, or even more, it is said thirteen or fourteen in number; but these, in such cases, may possibly have been the produce of two birds. They are nearly perfectly white, having only a very faint tinge of green, and are smooth and shining.

Male; length, from two feet to two feet two inches; bill, crimson red; there is a knob on its upper part near the forehead: the tooth is black. The upper mandible, which is broad and flat, is grooved on the edges, and depressed in the middle. Iris, dark brown; head, crown, and neck on the back, black glossed with green; nape, white, which colour thence surrounds the neck in a band widened at and towards the front. Chin and throat, black glossed with green; breast, white; across it is a broad band of clear orange chesnut brown, which extends around the bird, and meets on the back just below the nape: a rich dusky dark brown line runs down the lower part of the breast, widened below; about there are some pale yellowish red feathers; back, white.

The wings have the second feather the longest; greater and lesser wing coverts, white. Of the primaries, some are nearly black, and the outer webs of the secondaries are glossed with golden green, forming what in this tribe is called the speculum: the edges of three or four of these quills are chesnut; some of the tertiaries are nearly black on the outer edges, those of the longest rich chesnut. Tail, white at the base—the tip black; upper and under tail coverts, white. Legs and toes, pale yellowish red; webs, pale yellowish red.

The female is somewhat less than the male, and her plumage is not so clear and bright. The bill is without the knob. The band on the breast is not so wide.

The young, the first year, have the head and neck on the back blackish brown. The chin and throat are white, as also is the breast. The greater and lesser wing coverts, white; primaries, black; the secondaries shew the approach of the green speculum; tertiaries, white edged with chesnut. Legs, toes, and webs, pale yellowish red. The whole plumage is indistinct.



SHOVELER.

SHOVELER.

BLUE-WINGED SHOVELER. SHOVELER DUCK.
RED-BREASTED SHOVELER. COMMON SHOVELER.
BROAD-BILL. KERTLUTOCK.

Anas clypeata,	PENNANT. MONTAGU.
" *rubens,*	PENNANT.
" *muscaria,*	GESNER.
Spathulea clypeata,	FLEMING. SELBY.
Rhynchaspis clypeata,	GOULD.

Anas—A Duck.

Clypeata. Clypeus—A Shield.

THE Shoveler is more or less common in Europe, in Sweden, Norway, Holland, Prussia, Kamtschatka, Poland, Denmark, Russia, Germany, Italy, and France. It has been noticed in Asia, in Japan, India, Asia Minor, Persia, and the country near the Caucasus; and has been brought both from Southern and Northern Africa. It is found in America, in the United States and about Hudson's Bay; southwards also, it is said, as far as Carolina and Mexico.

In Yorkshire, one was shot in December, 1852, at Carlton Miniott, near Thirsk, which Edward D. Swarbreck, Esq., of the latter place, has written me word of. One, a male, was obtained at Riccall, near Selby, about the 28th. of March, 1850. Specimens have also occurred near Doncaster, York, Killingbeck, near Leeds, and Greatland, near Halifax. The Rev. R. P. Alington has met with this bird in the Louth market, no doubt a Lincolnshire specimen. It has also been noticed, he tells me, on Croxby Lake.

In Norfolk, several occurred near Lynn, in the winter of 1851-2. It is not uncommon in the neighbourhood of

Yarmouth; also in Cambridgeshire. It is met with likewise in Kent, along the coast, and so on through Sussex, Dorset, Devon, and Hants.

In Cornwall, it has occurred at Carrack road, near Mylor Creek, in the neighbourhood of Falmouth; one was purchased in that town October 25th., 1849, and several others January 19th., 1850, in the market. One was shot at Bulwick, in Northamptonshire, the Hon. T. L. Powys informed me, as was also another at Standlake, in Oxfordshire.

It is frequent in Wales, and in Ireland has been killed in the King's County. In Orkney young birds are not unfrequently met with, but the adults are rare. A male was shot in Sanday, by Mr. Strang, May 24th., 1833.

In Scotland a specimen, a female, together with the nest and eggs, was procured on the Frith of Forth; others have been obtained both northerly and in the south.

They have been known to breed in considerable numbers in Norfolk, at Winterton, Horsea, Stanford, and other places; also in Kent, in Romney Marsh. In Scotland, by the Tweed side.

Wild unreclaimed wastes, where water lies in ditches, pools, and ponds, encroaching on the land, and in its turn invaded by the natural herbage which it nourishes, are the favourite resort of the Shoveler.

These birds are winter visitors to us, but some remain every year to breed. Their times of migration are in the autumn in the beginning of the month of October, and in the spring in those of March and April.

They are exceedingly good birds to eat, according to Audubon, appertaining, as they do, more to fresh waters than to salt. In their natural habits they are not very shy. During daytime they keep on the larger waters, and towards evening repair to the smaller streams and their margins, and there remain through the night, till the break of morning warns them to retreat. The parent birds guard their young with much care.

They fly lightly and well, and straight forwards, though not with much rapidity. They walk tolerably well, but swimming is of course their 'forte.'

Their food consists of grass and the buds and young shoots of rushes and plants of different kinds, shrimps, worms, tadpoles, young frogs, leeches, snails, small fishes, and water and other insects. Most of their food is sought on the land, but some by dabbling in the water. They also swallow small stones.

The nest of this species, built besides rivers, lakes, and other waters, or in watery places, appears to be made of grass, commingled with down from the bird itself. In some cases the bare earth or sand is scarcely covered with any materials; in others, a tuft of grass is laid in. After the female has begun to sit, she covers the eggs with down plucked from her own body.

The eggs are as many as eight, nine, ten, or twelve in number. They are of a buff white colour, with a tinge of green.

Incubation lasts three weeks. The young leave the nest almost immediately after being hatched, and repair with their mother to the water.

This species bred in the year 1854, in the gardens of the Zoological Society, London.

Male; weight, about twenty-two ounces; length, about one foot eight inches; bill, long, and dark brownish lead-colour, the edges much dilated towards the tip. The tooth is small and turned inwards, and the margins of the bill in this bird are even more than ordinarily pectinated in both mandibles with the processes which fit into each other so as to act as a sieve for the food. Iris, bright yellow; head, crown, and neck on the back, brownish green, with a purple reflection, which colours in the summer change on the crown to blackish brown, spotted with lighter brown, and slightly glossed with green; the sides of the head and neck, reddish white, speckled with brown. Nape, white, in summer blackish brown, with the feathers margined with paler, and slightly glossed with green. The throat in summer is reddish white, speckled wi
brown; breast above white, on the middle rich chesnut b
in summer ferruginous, spotted with black, and on
with zigzag lines of the same; below, white. In s
becomes a mixture of yellowish brown and orange b
reddish white, the feathers being spotted with black.
dusky brown, on the middle dark brown, the edges
feathers lighter-coloured, and glossed with green;
lower part nearly black, tinged with green; in sum
becomes deep brown, margined with pale yellowish brow

The wings have the second quill feather the longest; gre
wing coverts, brown, tipped with white, forming thereby
bar across the wing; lesser wing coverts, pale blue; primaries

very dark dusky brown—nearly black; secondaries, also nearly black; the speculum, or spangle, very rich bright green; some of the tertiaries, which are long and pointed, pale blue on the outer webs, the others rich purple black. Tail, dusky brown—nearly black, edged with white, the outer feather entirely white; upper tail coverts, dark brown—nearly black, with a gloss of bronze green; under tail coverts, similar; in summer yellowish white, with streaks of brown. Legs and toes, reddish orange, yellowish orange in summer; claws, black; webs, darker reddish orange; in summer yellowish orange.

The female has the head, crown, and neck on the back, pale reddish brown of two shades, the shaft streaks being dusky; breast, pale brownish rufous, with dusky brown spots; back, dusky brown, the edges and tips of the feathers of a paler tint, rufous white. Lesser wing coverts, tinged with pale blue; the speculum green.

In the young birds at first the bill, which is scarcely larger than usual in proportion to their size, is not dilated, but in three or four weeks assumes its proper and peculiar shape. The young male resembles the female till the autumn. Bewick says that the full plumage is not acquired till after the second moult.

There were some dark spots on the white in the specimen killed near York.

The engraving is after a design by John Gatcombe, Esq., of Plymouth.

END OF VOL. VI.